Women as Letter Writers

Ada M. Ingpen

E3-30

From a mezzotint by C. Turner, after a painting by E. Burney

Fanny Burney
(Afterwards Madame D'Arblay.)

WOMEN AS LETTER-WRITERS

A Collection of Letters
Selected and Edited
By

ADA·M·INGPEN

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PREFACE

LETTER-WRITING, like so many time-honoured institutions, is becoming a lost art: it seems to have fallen into disuse with the quill-pen. Formerly, for those who were separated by distance, the voluminous letter was the most usual means of interchanging family news, thoughts, and ideas. But nowadays, with the ever-increasing facilities for quick travelling, the necessity has passed for the old-fashioned letter, so often a faithful record of daily life and opinions, and time can no longer be spared for the art of correspondence. It seems unlikely, therefore, that the present age will produce many such letters as were written in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Literary men have been justly famous for their correspondence, but women, with a few brilliant exceptions, have not taken a foremost place in the ranks of great letter-writers. If women's letters, however, have not the style, lucidity of thought, nor, generally speaking, the descriptive powers of literary men, they do possess characteristics and a charm of their own; they are frequently unstudied, written on any subject of

momentary interest, and often with a feminine touch of humour. It is true that women cannot boast of a Johnson, a Cowper, a Byron, or a FitzGerald; they can, however, lay claim to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, Margaret Fuller, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Lady Mary was well aware of her gifts for letter-writing, as we are told she requested one of her correspondents to preserve her letters, predicting that they would in the future be well known and widely read. Although the letters of literary women predominate in the present collection, it is not primarily intended to comprise those of literary women alone, but to constitute a representative selection of women's correspondence, drawn from old and modern sources. With one or two exceptions, the writers of these letters attained fame, but all, I venture to think, deserve to be remembered.

The owners of copyrights have very generously allowed me to include many letters in my selection; and although I have acknowledged their permissions in every case, in notes printed with the extracts, it is a pleasure to express my hearty thanks, and to repeat that my indebtedness is due to the following: His Honour Judge Parry, for *Dorothy Osborne*; Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, for *Kitty Clive*; Mrs. Butler, Mr. A. E. Edgeworth, and Professor Edgeworth, for *Maria Edgeworth*; Mrs. C. Bodham Johnson and Messrs. Jarrold &

Sons, for *Lady Hesketh*; Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., for *Ann Godwin* and *Sara Coleridge*; Mr. W. C. Hazlitt for *Mary Lamb*; Professor William Knight, for *Dorothy Wordsworth*; Mr. John Murray for *Susan Ferrier*; Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., for *Jane Austen*, *Fanny Kemble*, and *Mary Russell Mitford*; Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., for *Mary Howitt*; Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., for *Joanna Baillie* and *Harriet Martineau*; Mr. Alexander Carlyle and Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., for *Jane Welsh Carlyle*; Mr. Clement Shorter, for *Charlotte Brontë*; Mrs. Janet Ross, for *Sarah Austin*; Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., for *Harriet Beecher Stowe*; Messrs. W. Blackwood & Sons, for *Agnes Strickland*; Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., for *Anne Jameson*; Mr. J. W. Cross, for *George Eliot*; and Mr. William Michael Rossetti for *Christina Rossetti*.

A. M. I.

October 1909.

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Women as Letter Writers

MARGARET PASTON

"THE Paston Letters," so called, is a collection of correspondence written between the years 1424 and 1506, by a family of that name, belonging to the village of Paston in Norfolk. The letters, which are invaluable for the light that they shed on domestic affairs of the period, were first published by Sir John Fenn in 1787, and have since been edited, in a scholarly edition, by Mr. James Gairdner. It is an interesting fact that the letters of Margaret Paston are among the best in the collection. The letters printed below are from the selection of the correspondence edited by A. Ramsay, who modernised the spelling.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste

NORWICH, *Thursday, July* 1, 1451.

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY GOSSIP

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL HUSBAND—I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare. . . . I was at Topps' at dinner on St. Peter's day: there my

Lady Felbrigg and other gentlewomen desired to have had you there; they said they should all have been the merrier if ye had been there. My cousin Topps hath much care till she hears good tidings of her brother's matter; she told me that they should keep a day on Monday next coming betwixt her brother and Sir Andrew Hugard and Wyndham. I pray you send me word how they speed, and how ye speed in your own matters also.

Also, I pray you heartily that ye will send me a pot with treacle in haste, for I have been right evil at ease and your daughter both since that ye yeden [*went*] hence, and one of the tallest young men of this parish lyeth sick, and hath a great myrr [*murrain ?*] how he shall do God knoweth.

I have sent my Uncle Berney the pot with treacle that ye did buy for him; mine aunt recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to do for her as the bill maketh mention of that I send you with this letter, and as ye think best for to do therein. Sir Harry Inglos is passed to God this night, whose soul God assoil; and was carried forth this day at nine of the clock to St. Faith's, and there shall be buried.

If ye desire to buy any of his stuff, I pray you send me word thereof in haste, and I shall speak to Robert Inglos and to Wickingham thereof: I suppose they may be executors. The blessed Trinity have you in His keeping. Written at Norwich in haste on the Thursday next after St. Peter.

I pray you trust not to the sheriff for no fair language.

Yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

To my well-beloved son, Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste

CAISTER, *Tuesday, November,* between 1463 and 1466.

A MOTHER'S ADMONITIONS

I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that I have received a letter from you, the which he delivered to Master Roger at Lynn, whereby I conceive that ye think ye did not well that ye departed hence without my knowledge, wherefore I let you weet I was right evil paid with you; your father thought and thinketh yet, that I was assented to your departing, and that hath caused me to have great heaviness; I hope he will be your good father hereafter if ye demean you well, and do as ye ought to do to him; and I charge you upon my blessing that in anything touching your father that should be [*to*] his worship, profit or avail, that ye do your devoir and diligent labour to the furtherance therein as ye will have my good will, and that shall cause your father to be better father to you.

It was told me ye sent him a letter to London; what the intent thereof was I wot not; but though he take it but lightly, I would ye should not spare to write to him again as lowly as ye can, beseeching him to be your good father; and send him such tidings as be in the country there ye beeth, and that ye ware [*guard*] of your expenses better and [*than*] ye have been before this time, and be your own purse-bearer; I trow ye shall find it most profitable to you.

I would ye should send me word how ye do, and

how ye have shifted for yourself since ye departed hence, by some trusty man, and that your father have no knowledge thereof; I durst not let him know of the last letter that ye wrote to me, because he was so sore displeased with me at that time.

Item, I would ye should speak with Wykes, and know his disposition to Jane Walsham; she hath said since he departed hence but [*unless*] she might have him she would never [*be*] married, her heart is sore set on him; she told me that he said to her that there was no woman in the world he loved so well; I would not he should jape [*deceive*] her, for she meaneth good faith; and if he will not have her let me weet in haste, for I shall purvey for her in otherwise. . . . I sent your gray horse to Ruston to the farrier, and he saith he shall never be nought to ride, neither right good to plough nor to cast; he said he was splayed, and his shoulder rent from the body. I wot not what to do with him.

Your grandam would fain hear some tidings from you; it were well done that ye sent a letter to her how ye do as hastily as ye may, and God have you in His keeping, and make you a good man, and give you grace to do well as I would ye should do.

Written at Caister, the Tuesday next before Saint Edmund the King.

Your mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

I would ye should make much of the parson of Filley, the bearer hereof, and make him good cheer if ye may.

Margaret Paston to Sir John Paston

NORWICH, *Monday, April* 3, 1469.

MATRIMONIAL ADVICE

I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, thanking you for my seal that ye sent me, but I am right sorry that ye did so great cost thereupon, for one of forty pence should have served me right well; send me word what it cost you and I shall send you money therefor. I sent you a letter by a man of Yarmouth; send me word if ye have it, for I marvel ye sent me none answer thereof by Juddy.

I have none very [*certain* or *true*] knowledge of your insurance [*engagement*], but if ye be insured, I pray God send you joy and worship together, and so I trust ye shall have if it be as it is reported of her; and anemps [*before*] God ye are as greatly bound to her as ye were married, and therefore I charge you upon my blessing that ye be as true to her as she were married unto you in all degrees, and ye shall have the more grace and the better speed in all other things.

Also I would that ye should not be too hasty to be married till ye were sure of your livelihood, for ye must remember what charge ye shall have, and if ye have not to maintain it it will be a great rebuke; and therefore labour that ye may have releases of the lands and be in more surety of your land or than [*before*] ye be married.

The Duchess of Suffolk is at Ewelm, in Oxfordshire, and it is thought by your friends here, that it is done that she might be far and out of the way, and the rather feign excuse because of age or sickness if that the king would send for her for your matters . . . Also I would that ye should purvey for your sister to be with my

Lady of Oxford or with my Lady of Bedford, or in some other worshipful place whereas ye think best, and I will help to her finding, for we be either of us weary of other. I shall tell you more when I speak with you. . . .

Item, I send you the ouch [*a collar of gold*] with the diamond, by the bearer hereof. I pray you forget not to send me a kersche of cr'melle [*a kerchief of worsted*] for neckerchiefs for your sister Anne, for I am schent [*blamed*] of the good lady that she is with because she hath none, and I can none get in all this town.

I should write more to you but for lack of leisure; God have you in His keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written in haste on Easter Monday.

By your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

ANNE BOLEYN (1502-7-1536)

SECOND wife of Henry VIII., was the daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, afterwards Viscount Rochford and Earl of Wiltshire. Shortly after the King had sought for a divorce from Catherine of Aragon in 1527 he began to pay his addresses to Anne Boleyn, and was secretly married to her in January 1533. She was crowned at Westminster Hall on Whit Sunday of that year. In September 1533 she gave birth to the Princess Elizabeth; and in May 1536 she was tried and found guilty on a charge of high treason, and beheaded on Tower Green a few days later.

Anne Boleyn to Henry VIII

A ROYAL LOVE LETTER

[? 1527.]

SIRE,—It belongs only to the august mind of a great King, to whom Nature has given a heart full of generosity

towards the sex, to repay by favours so extraordinary an artless and short conversation with a girl. Inexhaustible as is the treasury of your Majesty's bounties, I pray you to consider that it cannot be sufficient to your generosity; for if you recompense so slight a conversation by gifts so great, what will you be able to do for those who are ready to consecrate their entire obedience to your desires? How great soever may be the bounties I have received, the joy that I feel in being loved by a King whom I adore, and to whom I would with pleasure make a sacrifice of my heart, if fortune had rendered it worthy of being offered to him, will ever be infinitely greater.

The warrant of Maid of Honour to the Queen induces me to think that your Majesty has some regard for me, since it gives me the means of seeing you oftener and of assuring you by my own lips (which I shall do on the first opportunity), that I am,

Your Majesty's very obliged and very obedient servant, without any reserve,

ANNE BOLEYN.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (1542-1587)

IF not actually born a queen, was near being so, as she succeeded her father, James V., before she was a week old. At the age of six, in 1548, Mary left Scotland for France, and was affianced to the eldest son of Henry II. and Catherine d' Medici. For ten years she remained at the French Court, and was married in 1558 to the Dauphin, who succeeded to the throne in the following year as Francis II., and died in 1560. Mary returned to Scotland in 1561, and in 1565 she made an unhappy marriage with her cousin, Henry

Stewart, Lord Darnley. His sudden death in February 1567 was attributed to the Earl of Bothwell, whom the Queen had favoured recently, and three months later she married him. This unpopular step lost her the support of her nobles, who took arms against her; with the defeat of her forces, she surrendered, and later abdicated in favour of her son, James VI. She made a last attempt to regain her lost throne with an army of 6,000 men, but was again defeated, when she sought the help of Queen Elizabeth, who imprisoned her for the rest of her life. Mary soon became the centre of a series of plots against Elizabeth's life, and on the discovery of certain letters in which the Scottish Queen signified approval of the assassination of Elizabeth, Mary was tried and sentenced in 1568, but her execution did not take place until 1587.

Mary Queen of Scots to her godchild, Elizabeth Pierrepont

THE PRESENT

DARLING,—I have received your letter and good tokens, for which I thank you. I am very glad you are so well. Remain with your mother and father this season, if willing to keep you, for the air and the weather are so trying here that I already begin to feel the change of the temperature from that of Worssop, where I did not walk much, not being allowed the command of my legs. Commend me to your father and mother very affectionately; also to your sister, and all I know, and to all who know me there. I have had your black silk robe made, and it shall be sent to you as soon as I receive the trimming, for which I wrote to London. This is all I can write to you now, except to send you as many blessings as there are

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

From a miniature by François Clouet at Windsor Castle.

p. 8]

days in the year; praying God to extend His arm over you and yours for ever.

In haste this 13th of September. Your very affectionate mistress, and best friend,

MARIE R.

Endorsed—"To my well-beloved bedfellow, Bess Pierrepont."

Mary Queen of Scots to Queen Elizabeth

A HEAVY IMPRISONMENT

BOLTON CASTLE, *January* 22, 1569.

MADAM MY GOOD SISTER,—I know not what occasion I can have given to any of this company, or at least of your kingdom, that they should endeavour to persuade you (as it appears to me, by your letter) of a thing so distant from my thoughts, whereof my conduct has borne witness. Madam, I came to you in my trouble for succour and support on the faith of the assurance that I might reckon upon you for every assistance in my necessity; and, for this reason, I refrained from applying for any other aid to friends, relatives, and ancient allies, relying solely upon your promised favour. I have never attempted, either by word or deed, ought to the contrary, and nobody can lay to my charge anything against you. Still, to my unspeakable regret, I see my actions falsely represented and construed; but I hope that God with time, the Father of Truth, will declare otherwise, and prove to you the sincerity of my intentions towards you.

In the meantime I am treated so rigorously that

I cannot comprehend whence proceeds the extreme indignation, which this demonstrates, that you have conceived against me, in return for the confidence which I have placed in you, in preference to all other princes, and the desire I have shewn to obtain your favour. I cannot but deplore my evil fortune, seeing you have been pleased not only to refuse me your presence, causing me to be declared unworthy of it by your nobles, but also suffered me to be torn in pieces by my rebels; without even making them answer to that which I had alleged against them; not allowing me to have copies of their false accusations[1] or affording me any liberty to accuse them. You have also permitted them to retire, with a decree, in a manner absolving and strengthening them in this usurped so-called regency, and have thrown the blame upon me, and covertly condemned me without giving me a hearing, detained my ministers, caused me to be removed by force, without informing me what has been resolved upon respecting my affairs; why I am to be transferred to another abode; how long I am to remain there; or for what reason I am confined, and all support and my requests refused.

All these things, along with other petty annoyances, such as not permitting me to receive news from my relatives in France, nor from my servants on my private necessities, having in like manner anew interdicted all communication with Scotland, nay, refused me leave to give any commission to one of my servants, or to send my letters by them, grieve me so sorely and make me, to tell you the truth, so timid and irresolute that I am at a loss how to act, nor can I resolve upon

[1] The contents of the silver-gilt casket.

obeying so sudden an order to depart, without first receiving some news from my commissioners, not that this place is a whit more agreeable than any other which you may be pleased to assign, when you have made me acquainted with your good-will towards me, and on what conditions.

Wherefore, Madam, I entreat you not to think that I mean any offence, but a natural care which I owe to myself and my people, to wish to know the end before disposing of myself so lightly, I mean voluntarily; for I am in your power, and you can, in spite of me, command even the lowest of your subjects to sacrifice me, without my being able to do anything but appeal to God and you, for other support I have none; and, thank God, I am not so silly as to suppose that any of your subjects concern themselves about the affairs of a poor, forlorn, foreign princess, who, next to God, seeks your aid alone, and if my adversaries tell you anything to the contrary, they are false and deceive you; for I honour you as my elder sister, and, notwithstanding all the grievances above mentioned, I shall be every ready to solicit, as of my elder sister, your friendship before that of any other. Would to God you would grant it me, and treat me as I should wish to deserve in your place! When this shall come to pass, I shall be happy; if not, God grant me patience, and you His grace! And here I will humbly recommend myself to yours, praying God to grant you, madam, health and a long and happy life.

From Bolton. this xxii of January,

Your very affectionate good sister and cousin,

MARY R.

Mary Queen of Scots to the Archbishop of Glasgow

FEATHERED FRIENDS

From Sheffield, *July* 9, 1574.

Monsieur de Glasgow,—I have nothing particular to say at present, except that, thank God, I am in better health than I was before using the baths, and when I last wrote to you. I beg you will procure for me some turtle-doves, and some Barbary fowls. I wish to try if I can rear them in this country, as your brother told me that, when he was with you, he had raised some in a cage, as also some red partridges; and send me, by the person who brings them to London, instructions how to manage them. I shall take great pleasure in rearing them in cages, which I do all sorts of little birds I can meet with. This will be amusement for a prisoner, particularly since there are none in this country, as I wrote to you not long ago. Pray see to it that my directions be complied with, and I will pray God to have you in His keeping.

Your very good mistress and friend,

Mary R.

QUEEN ELIZABETH (1533–1603)

was the daughter of Henry VIII. by his second wife, Anne Boleyn. The second letter printed here was written a fortnight after the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, when Elizabeth was fifty-three, and James VI. twenty.

Princess Elizabeth to Lord Admiral Seymour

AN EARLY LOVE AFFAIR

February 27, 1547.

My Lord Admiral,—The letter you have written to me is the most obliging, and, at the same time, the most

eloquent in the world. And as I do not feel myself competent to reply to so many courteous expressions, I shall content myself with unfolding to you, in few words, my real sentiments. I confess to you that your letter, all eloquent as it is, has very much surprised me ; for, besides that neither my age nor my inclination allows me to think of marriage, I never could have believed that any one would have spoken to me of nuptials at a time when I ought to think of nothing but sorrow for the death of my father. And to him I owe so much, that I must have two years at least to mourn for his loss. And how can I make up my mind to become a wife before I shall have enjoyed for some years my virgin state, and arrived at years of discretion ?

Permit me, then, my Lord Admiral, to tell you frankly, that as there is no one in the world who more esteems your merit than myself, or who sees you with more pleasure as a disinterested person, so would I preserve to myself the privilege of recognising you as such, without entering into that strict bond of matrimony, which often causes one to forget the possession of true merit. Let your highness be well persuaded that though I decline the happiness of becoming your wife I shall never cease to interest myself in all that can crown your merit with glory, and shall ever feel the greatest pleasure in being your servant and good friend.

ELIZABETH.

Queen Elizabeth to King James VI.

AN APOLOGY

February 14, 1586–7.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I would you knew (though not felt) the extreme dolour that overwhelms my mind

for that *miserable accident*[1] which, far contrary to my meaning, hath befallen. I have now sent this kinsman of mine, whom, ere now, it hath pleased you to favour, to instruct you truly of that which is irksome for my pen to tell you. I beseech you, that as God and many [*more*] know how innocent I am in this case, so you will believe that, if I had hid aught, I would have abided by it. I am not so base-minded that the fear of any living creature or prince should make me afraid to do that were just, or, when done, to deny the same. I am not of so base a lineage, nor carry so vile a mind. But as not to disguise fits not the mind of a king,[2] so will I never dissemble my actions, but cause them to show even as I meant them. Thus assuring yourself of me, that as I know this was deserved, yet, if I had meant it, I would never lay it on others' shoulders, no more will I *not*[3] damnify myself that thought it not.

The circumstances it may please you to have [*learn*] of this bearer (Robert Carey), and for your part, think not you have in the world a more loving kinswoman nor a more dear friend than myself, nor any that will watch more carefully to preserve you and your state. And who shall otherwise persuade you, judge them more partial to others than to you. And thus, in haste, I leave to trouble you, beseeching God to send you a long reign.

Your most assured loving sister and cousin,

ELIZABETH R.

1 Cutting off the head of his mother.

2 She uses a double negative. Evidently should read: "That disguise fits not the mind of a king."

3 Again a double negative contradicts her own meaning.

Queen Elizabeth to Lady Norris

THE QUEEN'S CONDOLENCES

MINE OWN DEAR CROW,—Although we have deferred long to represent unto you our grieved thoughts, because we liked full ill to yield you the first reflections of our misfortunes, whom we have always sought to cherish and comfort, yet knowing now that necessity must bring it to your ears, and nature consequently must raise many passionate workings in your heart, we have resolved no longer to smother either our care for your sorrow, or the sympathy of our grief for his death; wherein, if society in sorrowing work any diminution, we do assure you, by this true messenger of our mind, that nature can have stirred no more dolorous affection in you as a mother for a dear son than the grateful memory of his services past hath wrought in us, his sovereign, apprehension of the miss of so worthy a servant.

But now that nature's common work is done, and he that was born to die hath paid his tribute, let that Christian discretion stay the flow of your immoderate grieving, which hath instructed you, both by example and knowledge, that nothing of this kind hath happened but by God's providence, and that these lines from your loving and gracious sovereign serve to assure you that there shall ever remain the lively character of you and yours that are left, in valuing rightly all their faithful and honest endeavours.

More at this time I will not write of this *unsilent* subject, but have despatched this gentleman to visit both your lord, and to condole with you in the true sense of our love, and to pray you that the world may

see, that what time cureth in weak minds, that discretion and moderation help you in this accident, where there is so opportune occasion to demonstrate true patience and moderation.

Queen Elizabeth to Dr. Cox, Bishop of Ely

A ROYAL COMMAND

PROUD PRELATE,—You know what you were before I made you what you are now. If you do not immediately comply with my request, I will unfrock you, by G—d

ELIZABETH.

DOROTHY OSBORNE (1627–1695)

WAS the daughter of Sir Peter Osborne. She was courted by Sir William, the eldest son of Sir John Temple, who sat in the Long Parliament, but the match was disapproved of by her father, an ardent Royalist. Although separated for seven years, the lovers, however, were constant to one another, as Dorothy Osborne's letters testify. They were at length married in 1655. Judge Parry has edited a valuable edition of her letters, from which he has kindly allowed the following to be reprinted:—

Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple

DIARY OF A DAY

[1652–1654]

SIR,—I have been reckoning up how many faults you lay to my charge in your last letter, and I find I am severe, unjust, unmerciful, and unkind. Oh me, how should one do to mend all these! 'Tis work for an age, and 'tis to be feared I shall be so old before

I am good, that 'twill not be considerable to anybody but myself whether I am so or not. I say nothing of the pretty humour you fancied me in, in your dream, because 'twas a dream. Sure if it had been anything else, I should have remembered that my Lord L. loves to have his chamber to himself! But seriously, now, I wonder at your patience. How could you hear me talk so senselessly, though 'twere but in your sleep, and not be ready to beat me! Well, dreams are pleasant things to people whose humours are so; but to have the spleen and to dream upon't, is a punishment I would not wish my greatest enemy! I seldom dream, or never remember them, unless they have been so sad as to put me into such disorder as I can hardly recover when I am awake, and some of those I am confident I shall never forget.

You ask me how I pass my time here. I can give you a perfect account not only of what I do for the present, but what I am likely to do this seven year if I stay here so long. I rise in the morning reasonably early, and before I am ready I go round the house till I am weary of that, and then into the garden till it grows too hot for me. About ten o'clock I think of making me ready, and when that's done I go into my father's chamber, from thence to dinner, where my cousin Molle and I sit in great state, in a room, and at a table that would hold a great many more. After dinner we sit and talk till Mr. B. comes in question, and then I am gone. The heat of the day is spent in reading and working, and about six or seven o'clock I walk out into a common that lies hard by the house, where a great many wenches keep sheep and cows, and sit in the shade singing of ballads. I go to them and compare

their voices and beauties to some ancient shepherdesses that I have read of, and find a vast difference there; but, trust me, these are as innocent as those could be. I talk to them, "and find they want nothing to make them the happiest people in the world, but the knowledge that they are so." Most commonly when we are in the midst of our discourse, one looks about her, and spies her cows going into the corn, and then away they all run as if they had wings at their heels. I, that am not so nimble, stay behind; and when I see them driving home their cattle, I think 'tis time for me to retire too. When I have supped, I go into the garden, and so to the side of a small river that runs by it, where I sit down and wish you with me (you had best say this is not kind neither). In earnest, 'tis a pleasant place, and would be much more so to me if I had your company. I sit there sometimes till I am lost with thinking; and were it not for some cruel thoughts of the crossness of our fortunes that will not let me sleep there, I should forget that there were such a thing to be done as going to bed.

Since I writ this my company is increased by two, my brother Harry and a fair niece, the eldest of my brother Peyton's daughters. She is so much a woman, that I am almost ashamed to say I am her aunt; and so pretty, that, if I had any design to gain of servant, I should like her company; but I have none, and therefore shall endeavour to keep her here as long as I can persuade her father to spare her, for she will easily consent to it, having so much of my humour (though it be the worst thing in her) as to like a melancholy place and little company. My brother John is not come down again, nor am I certain when he will

be here. He went from London into Gloucestershire to my sister, who was very ill, and his youngest girl, of which he was very fond, is since dead. But I believe by the time his wife has a little recovered her sickness and the loss of her child, he will be coming this way. My father is reasonably well, but keeps his chamber still, and will hardly, I am afraid, ever be so perfectly recovered as to come abroad again.

I am sorry for poor Walter; but you need not doubt of what he has of yours in his hands, for it seems he does not use to do his work himself. I speak seriously; he keeps a Frenchman that sets all his seals and rings. If what you say of my Lady Leppington be of your own knowledge, I shall believe you, but otherwise I can assure you I have heard from people that pretend to know her very well, that her kindness to Compton was very moderate, and that she never liked him so well as when he died and gave her his estate. But they might be deceived, and 'tis not so strange as that you should imagine a coldness and an indifference in my letters, when I so little meant it; but I am not displeased you should desire my kindness enough to apprehend the loss of it when it is safest. Only I would not have you apprehend it so far as to believe it possible—that were an injury to all the assurances that I have given you, and if you love me you cannot think me unworthy. I should think myself so, if I found you grew indifferent to me, that I have had so long and so particular a friendship for; but, sure, this is more than I need to say. You are enough in my heart to know all my thoughts, and if so, you know better than I can tell you how much I am

YOURS.

Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple

A LOVE-LETTER

[1652–1654.]

'Tis well you have given me your reproaches; I can allow you to tell me of my faults kindly and like a friend. Possibly it is a weakness in me to aim at the world's esteem, as if I could not be happy without it; but there are certain things that custom has made almost of absolute necessity, and reputation I take to be one of these. If one could be invisible I should choose that; but since all people are seen and known, and shall be talked of in spite of their teeth, who is that does not desire, at least, that nothing of ill may be said of them whether justly or otherwise? I never knew any one so satisfied with their own innocence as to be content the world should think them guilty. Some out of pride have seemed to contemn ill reports when they have found they could not avoid them, but none out of strength of reason, though many have pretended to it. No, not my Lady Newcastle with all her philosophy, therefore you must not expect it from me. I shall never be ashamed to own that I have a particular value for you above any other, but 'tis not the greatest merit of person will excuse a want of fortune; in some degrees I think it will, at least with the most rational part of the world, and, as far as that will read, I desire it should. I would not have the world believe I married out of interest and to please my friends; I had much rather they should know I chose the person, and took his fortune, because 'twas necessary, and that I prefer a competency with one I esteem infinitely before a vast estate in other hands. 'Tis much easier, sure, to get a good fortune than a

good husband; but whosoever marries without any consideration of fortune shall never be allowed to do it out of so reasonable an apprehension: the whole world (without any reserve) shall pronounce they did it merely to satisfy their giddy humour.

Besides, though you imagine 'twere a great argument of my kindness to consider nothing but you, in earnest I believe 'twould be an injury to you. I do not see that it puts any value upon men when women marry them for love (as they term it); 'tis not their merit, but our folly, that is always presumed to cause it; and would it be any advantage to you to have your wife thought an indiscreet person? All this I can say to you; but when my brother disputes it with me I have other arguments for him, and I drove him up so close t'other night that, for want of a better gap to get out at, he was fain to say that he feared as much your having a fortune as you having none, for he saw you held my Lord L——'s principles, that religion or honour were things you did not consider at all, and that he was confident you would take any engagement, serve in any employment, or do anything to advance yourself. I had no patience for this. To say you were a beggar, your father not worth £4,000 in the whole world, was nothing in comparison of having no religion or no honour. I forgot all my disguise, and we talked ourselves weary; he renounced me again, and I defied him, but both in as civil language as it would permit, and parted in great anger with the usual ceremony of a leg and a courtesy, that you would have died with laughing to have seen us.

The next day, I, not being at dinner, saw him not till night, then he came into my chamber, where I supped

but he did not. Afterwards Mr. Gibson and he and I talked of indifferent things till all but we two went to bed. Then he sat half an hour and said not one word, nor I to him. At last in a pitiful tone, "Sister," says he, "I have heard you say that when anything troubles you, of all things you apprehend going to bed, because there it increases upon you, and you lie at the mercy of all your sad thoughts, which the silence and darkness of the night adds a horror to. I am at that pass now; I vow to God I would not endure another night like the last to gain a crown." I, who resolved to take no notice what ailed him, said 'twas a knowledge I had raised from my spleen only, and so fell into a discourse of melancholy and the causes, and from that (I know not how) into religion; and we talked so long of it, and so devoutly that it laid all our anger. We grew to a calm and peace with all the world; two hermits conversing in a cell they equally inhabit never expressed more humble, charitable kindness, one towards another, than we. He asked my pardon, and I his, and he has promised me never to speak of it whilst he lives, but leave the event to God Almighty; and till he sees it done, he will be always the same to me that he is; then he shall leave me, he says, not out of want of kindness to me, but because he cannot see the ruin of a person that he loves so passionately, and in whose happiness he has laid up all his. These are the terms we are at, and I am confident he will keep his word with me, so that you have no reason to fear him in any respect; for though he should break his promise, he should never make me break mine. No, let me assure you, this rival, nor any other, shall ever alter me, therefore spare your jealousy, or turn it all into kindness.

I will write every week, and no miss of letters shall give us any doubts of one another. Time nor accidents shall not prevail upon our hearts, and, if God Almighty please to bless us, we will meet the same we are, or happier. I will do as you bid me. I will pray, and wish, and hope, but you must do so too, then, and be so careful of yourself that I may have nothing to reproach you with when you come back.

That vile wench lets you see all my scribbles, I believe; how do you know I took care your hair should not be spoiled? 'Tis more than e'er you did. I think you are so negligent on't, and keep it so ill, 'tis pity you should have it. May you have better luck in the cutting of it than I had with mine. I cut it two or three years agone, and it never grew since. Look to it; if I keep the lock you give me better than you do all the rest, I shall not spare you; expect to be soundly chidden. What do you mean to do with all my letters? Leave them behind you? If you do it must be in safe hands: some of them concern you, and me, and other people besides us very much, and they will almost load a horse to carry.

Do not my cousins at M—— P—— mistrust us a little? I have great belief they do. I'm sure Robin C. told my brother of it since I was last in town. Of all things, I admire my cousin Molle has not got it by the end, he that frequents that family so much, and is at this instant at Kimbolton. If he has, and conceals it, he is very discreet; I could never discern by anything that he knew it. I shall endeavour to accustom myself to the noise on't, and make it as easy to me as I can, though I had much rather it were not talked of till there were an absolute necessity of discovering it;

and you can oblige me in nothing more than in concealing it. I take it very kindly that you promise to use all your interest in your f[ather] to persuade him to endeavour our happiness, and he appears so confident of his power that it gives me great hopes.

Dear, shall we ever be so happy, think you? Ah! I dare not hope it. Yes, 'tis not want of love gives me these fears. No, in earnest, I think (nay, I am sure) I love you more than ever, and 'tis that only gives me these despairing thoughts; when I consider how small a proportion of happiness is allowed in this world, and how great mine would be in a person for whom I have a passionate kindness, and who has the same for me. As it is infinitely above what I can deserve and more than God Almighty usually allots to the best people, I can find nothing in reason but seems to be against me; and, methinks, 'tis as vain in me to expect it as 'twould be to hope I might be a queen (if that were really as desirable a thing as 'tis thought to be); and it is just it should be so.

We complain of this world, and the variety of crosses and afflictions it abounds in; and yet for all this who is weary on't (more than in discourse)? who thinks with pleasure of leaving it, or preparing for the next? We see old folks, that have outlived all the comforts of life, desire to continue it, and nothing can wean us from the folly of preferring a mortal being, subject to great infirmity and unavoidable decays, before an immortal one, and all the glories that are promised with it. Is not this very like preaching? Well, 'tis too good for you; you shall have no more on't. I am afraid you are not mortified enough for such discourses to work upon (though I am not of my brother's

opinion neither, that you have no religion in you). In earnest, I never took anything he ever said half so ill, as nothing, sure, is so great an injury. It must suppose one to be a devil in human shape. Oh me! Now I am speaking of religion, let me ask you, is not his name Bagshaw that you say rails on love and women? Because I heard one t'other day speaking of him, and commending his wit, but withal said he was a perfect atheist. If so, I can allow him to hate us, and Love, which, sure, has something of divine in it, since God requires it of us. I am coming into my preaching vein again. What think you, were it not a good way of preferment, as the times are? If you advise me to it I'll venture. The woman at Somerset House was cried up mightily. Think on't.

Dear, I am yours.

LADY RACHEL RUSSELL (1636–1723)

Lady Rachel Wriothesley was the second daughter and co-heiress of the Earl of Southampton. She married, in 1669, William, Lord Russell, who was arrested on a charge of high treason for participation in the Rye House Plot, and was found guilty and beheaded on July 21, 1683. Lady Russell, who appeared in court at her husband's trial as his secretary, has testified in her well-known letters to the honour and worth of his character.

Lady Rachael Russell to Lord Russell

THE EVENING LETTER

Tunbridge Wells, 1678.

After a toilsome day, there is some refreshment to be telling our story to our best friends. I have seen

your girl well laid in bed, and ourselves have made our suppers upon biscuits, a bottle of white wine, and another of beer, mingled my uncle's whey with nutmeg and sugar. None are disposing to bed, not so much as complaining of weariness. Beds and things are all very well here; our want is, yourself and good weather. But now I have told you our present condition; to say a little of the past. I do really think, if I could have imagined the illness of the journey, it would have discouraged me; it is not to be expressed how bad the way is from Sevenoaks; but our horses did exceeding well, and Spencer, very diligent, often off his horse, to lay hold of the coach. I have not much more to say this night: I hope the quilt is remembered; and Frances must remember to send more biscuits either when you come, or soon after. I long to hear from you, my dearest soul, and truly think your absence already an age. I have no mind to my gold plate: here is no table to set it on; but if that does not come I desire you would bid Betty Foster send the silver glass I use every day. In discretion I haste to bed, longing for Monday, I assure you.

From your

R. Russell.

Lady Rachel Russell to Lord Russell.

THE SON AND HEIR

Stratton, *September* 20, 1681.

To see anybody preparing, and taking their way to see what I long to do a thousand times more than they, makes me not endure to suffer their going, without

saying something to my best life; though it is a kind of anticipating my joy when we shall meet, to allow myself so much before the time; but I confess I feel a great deal that, though I left London with great reluctance (as it is easy to persuade men a woman does), yet that I am not like to leave Stratton with greater. They will tell you how well I got hither and how well I found our dear treasure here: your boy will please you; you will, I think, find him improved, though I tell you so beforehand. They fancy he wanted you; for, as soon as I alighted, he followed, calling Papa; but I suppose it is the word he has most command of, so was not disobliged by the little fellow. The girls were fine in remembrance of the happy 29th of September; and we drank your health, after a reindeer pie; and at night your girls and I supped on a sack posset: nay, Master [1] would have his room, and for haste burnt his fingers in the posset; but he does but rub his hands for it. It is the most glorious weather here that ever was seen. The coach shall meet you at the cabbage garden: be there by eight o'clock or a little after; though I guess you can hardly be there so soon, day breaks so late; and indeed the mornings are so misty, it is not wholesome to be in the air so early. I do propose going to my neighbour Worsley to-day. I would fain be telling my heart more things—anything to be in a kind of talk with him; but, I believe, Spencer stays for my despatch: he was willing to go early; but this was to be the delight of this morning, and the support of the day. It is performed in bed, thy pillow at my back, where thy dear head shall lie, I hope, to-morrow night, and

[1] Her son.

many more, I trust in His mercy, notwithstanding all our enemies or ill-wishers. Love, and be willing to be loved by,

R. Russell.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU (1689–1762)

was the eldest daughter of the Duke of Kingston and the wife of Edward Wortley Montagu. She is chiefly remembered for her travels in the East and her famous letters written from Constantinople during her husband's term as Ambassador at the Porte. She enjoyed the reputation of being a beauty and a wit, and was for many years the friend and correspondent of Pope.

To the Countess of [Mar].

VISITS TO THE HAREM

Adrianople, *April* 18, O.S. [1717].

I wrote to you, dear sister, and to all my other English correspondents, by the last ship, and only Heaven can tell when I shall have another opportunity of sending to you; but I cannot forbear writing, though perhaps my letter may lie upon my hands this two months. To confess the truth, my head is so full of my entertainment yesterday, that 'tis absolutely necessary for my own repose to give it some vent. Without farther preface, I will then begin my story.

I was invited to dine with the Grand Vizier's lady, and it was with a great deal of pleasure I prepared myself for an entertainment which was never given before to any Christian. I thought I should very little satisfy her curiosity (which I did not doubt was a considerable motive to the invitation) by going in a dress she was

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU

From an engraving by W. Greatbatch after the picture in the possession of the Earl of Harrington.

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used to see, and therefore dressed myself in the court habit of Vienna, which is much more magnificent than ours. However, I chose to go *incognita*, to avoid any disputes about ceremony, and went in a Turkish coach, only attended by my woman that held up my train, and the Greek lady who was my interpretess. I was met at the court door by her black eunuch, who helped me out of the coach with great respect, and conducted me through several rooms, where her she-slaves, finely dressed, were ranged on each side. In the innermost I found the lady sitting on her sofa, in a sable vest. She advanced to meet me, and presented me to half a dozen of her friends with great civility. She seemed a very good woman, near fifty years old. I was surprised to observe so little magnificence in her house, the furniture being all very moderate; and, except the habits and number of her slaves, nothing about her that appeared expensive. She guessed at my thoughts, and told me that she was no longer of an age to spend either her time or money in superfluities; that her whole expense was in charity, and her whole employment praying to God. There was no affectation in this speech; both she and her husband are entirely given up to devotion. He never looks upon any other woman; and, what is much more extraordinary, touches no bribes, notwithstanding the example of all his predecessors. He is so scrupulous in this point, that he would not accept Mr. W[ortley]'s present, till he had been assured over and over again that it was a settled perquisite of his place at the entrance of every ambassador.

She entertained me with all kind of civility till dinner came in, which was served, one dish at a time, to a vast

number, all finely dressed after their manner, which I do not think so bad as you have perhaps heard it represented. I am a very good judge of their eating, having lived three weeks in the house of an *effendi* at Belgrade, who gave us very magnificent dinners, dressed by his own cooks, which the first week pleased me extremely; but I own I then began to grow weary of it and desired our own cook might add a dish or two after our manner. But I attribute this to custom. I am very much inclined to believe an Indian, that had never tasted of either, would prefer their cookery to ours. Their sauces are very high, all the roast very much done. They use a great deal of rich spice. The soup is served for the last dish; and they have at least as great variety of ragouts as we have. I was very sorry I could not eat of as many as the good lady would have had me, who was very earnest in serving me of every thing. The treat concluded with coffee and perfumes, which is a high mark of respect; two slaves kneeling *censed* my hair, clothes, and handkerchief. After this ceremony, she commanded her slaves to play and dance, which they did with their guitars in their hands; and she excused to me their want of skill, saying she took no care to accomplish them in that art.

I returned her thanks, and soon after took my leave. I was conducted back in the same manner I entered; and would have gone straight to my own house; but the Greek lady with me earnestly solicited me to visit the *kiyâya's* lady, saying, he was the second officer in the empire, and ought indeed to be looked upon as the first, the Grand Vizier having only the name, while he exercised the authority. I had found so little diversion in this *harém*, that I had no mind to go into another.

But her importunity prevailed with me, and I am extreme glad that I was so complaisant.

All things here were with quite another air than at the Grand Vizier's; and the very house confessed the difference between an old devote and a young beauty. It was nicely clean and magnificent. I was met at the door by two black eunuchs, who led me through a long gallery between two ranks of beautiful young girls, with their hair finely plaited, almost hanging to their feet, all dressed in fine light damasks, brocaded with silver. I was sorry that decency did not permit me to stop to consider them nearer. But that thought was lost upon my entrance into a large room, or rather pavilion, built round with gilded sashes, which were most of them thrown up, and the trees planted near them gave an agreeable shade, which hindered the sun from being troublesome. The jessamines and honeysuckles that twisted round their trunks shed a soft perfume, increased by a white marble fountain playing sweet water in the lower part of the room, which fell into three or four basins with a pleasing sound. The roof was painted with all sorts of flowers, falling out of gilded baskets, that seemed tumbling down. On a sofa, raised three steps, and covered with fine Persian carpets, sat the *kiyàya's* lady, leaning on cushions of white satin, embroidered; and at her feet sat two young girls, the eldest about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dressed perfectly rich, and almost covered with jewels. But they were hardly seen near the fair *Fatima* (for that is her name), so much her beauty effaced every thing I have seen, all that has been called lovely either in England or Germany, and [I] must own that I never saw any thing so gloriously beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have

been taken notice of near hers. She stood up to receive me, saluting me after their fashion, putting her hand upon her heart with a sweetness full of majesty, that no court breeding could ever give. She ordered cushions to be given to me, and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honour. I confess, though the Greek lady had before given me a great opinion of her beauty, I was so struck with admiration, that I could not for some time speak to her, being wholly taken up in gazing. That surprising harmony of features! that charming result of the whole! that exact proportion of body! that lovely bloom of complexion unsullied by art! the unutterable enchantment of her smile!—But her eyes!—large and black, with all the soft languishment of the blue! every turn of her face discovering some new charm.

After my first surprise was over, I endeavoured, by nicely examining her face, to find out some imperfection, without any fruit of my search, but being clearly convinced of the error of that vulgar notion, that a face perfectly regular would not be agreeable; nature having done for her with more success, what Apelles is said to have essayed, by a collection of the most exact features, to form a perfect face, and to that, a behaviour so full of grace and sweetness, such easy motions, with an air so majestic, yet free from stiffness or affectation, that I am persuaded, could she be suddenly transported upon the most polite throne of Europe, nobody would think her other than born and bred to be a queen, though educated in a country we call barbarous. To say all in a word, our most celebrated English beauties would vanish near her.

She was dressed in a *caftán* of gold brocade, flowered

with silver, very well fitted to her shape, and showing to advantage the beauty of her bosom, only shaded by a thin gauze of her shift. Her drawers were pale pink, green and silver, her slippers white, finely embroidered: her lovely arms adorned with bracelets of diamonds, and her broad girdle set round with diamonds; upon her head a rich Turkish handkerchief of pink and silver, her own fine black hair hanging a great length in various tresses, and on one side of her head some bodkins of jewels. I am afraid you will accuse me of extravagance in this description. I think I have read somewhere that women always speak in rapture when they speak of beauty, but I cannot imagine why they should not be allowed to do so. I rather think it [a] virtue to be able to admire without any mixture of desire or envy. The gravest writers have spoken with great warmth of some celebrated pictures and statues. The workmanship of Heaven certainly excels all our weak imitations, and, I think, has a much better claim to our praise. For me, I am not ashamed to own I took more pleasure in looking on the beauteous Fatima than the finest piece of sculpture could have given me.

She told me the two girls at her feet were her daughters, though she appeared too young to be their mother. Her fair maids were ranged below the sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the ancient nymphs. I do not think all nature could have furnished such a scene of beauty. She made them a sign to play and dance. Four of them immediately began to play some soft airs on instruments, between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had seen before. Nothing

could be more artful, or more proper to raise certain ideas. The tunes so soft !—the motions so languishing ! —accompanied with pauses and dying eyes ! half-falling back, and then recovering themselves. . . . I suppose you may have read that the Turks have no music but what is shocking to the ears ; but this account is from those who never heard any but what is played in the streets, and is just as reasonable as if a foreigner should take his ideas of the English music from the bladder and string, and marrow-bones and cleavers. I can assure you that the music is extremely pathetic ; 'tis true I am inclined to prefer the Italian, but perhaps I am partial. I am acquainted with a Greek lady who sings better than Mrs. Robinson, and is very well skilled in both, who gives the preference to the Turkish. 'Tis certain they have very fine natural voices ; these were very agreeable. When the dance was over, four fair slaves came into the room with silver censers in their hands, and perfumed the air with amber, aloes-wood, and other scents. After this they served me coffee upon their knees in the finest japan china, with *soucoupes* of silver-gilt. The lovely Fatima entertained me all this time in the most polite, agreeable manner, calling me often *Guzél sultanum*, or the beautiful sultana, and desiring my friendship with the best grace in the world, lamenting that she could not entertain me in my own language.

When I took my leave, two maids brought in a fine silver basket of embroidered handkerchiefs ; she begged I would wear the richest for her sake, and gave the others to my woman and interpretess. I retired through the same ceremonies as before, and could not help fancying I had been some time in Mahomet's paradise,

so much was I charmed with what I had seen. I know not how the relation of it appears to you. I wish it may give you part of my pleasure ; for I would have my dear sister share in all the diversions of, etc.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Mar

DINING WITH THE SULTANA

PERA OF CONSTANTINOPLE, *March* 10, O.S. [1718].

I have not written to you, dear sister, these many months :—a great piece of self-denial. But I know not where to direct, or what part of the world you were in. I have received no letter from you since that short note of April last, in which you tell me, that you are on the point of leaving England, and promise me a direction for the place you stay in ; but I have in vain expected it till now : and now I only learn from the gazette, that you are returned, which induces me to venture this letter to your house at London. I had rather ten of my letters should be lost, than you imagine I don't write ; and I think it is hard fortune if one in ten don't reach you. However, I am resolved to keep the copies, as testimonies of my inclination to give you, to the utmost of my power, all the diverting part of my travels, while you are exempt from all the fatigues and inconveniences.

I went to see the Sultana Hafitén, favourite of the late Emperor Mustapha, who, you know (or perhaps you don't know), was deposed by his brother, the reigning Sultan Achmet, and died a few weeks after, being

poisoned, as it was generally believed. This lady was, immediately after his death, saluted with an absolute order to leave the seraglio, and choose herself a husband from the great men at the Porte. I suppose you may imagine her overjoyed at this proposal. Quite contrary: these women, who are called, and esteem themselves, queens, look upon this liberty as the greatest disgrace and affront that can happen to them. She threw herself at the Sultan's feet, and begged him to poignard her, rather than use his brother's widow with that contempt. She represented to him, in agonies of sorrow, that she was privileged from this misfortune, by having brought five princes into the Ottoman family; but all the boys being dead, and only one girl surviving, this excuse was not received, and she [was] compelled to make her choice. She chose Bekir Effendi, then secretary of state, and above fourscore years old, since she must honour some subject so far as to be called his wife, she would choose him as a mark of her gratitude, since it was he that had presented her at the age of ten years old, to her last lord. But she has never permitted him to pay her one visit; though it is now fifteen years she has been in his house, where she passes her time in uninterrupted mourning, with a constancy very little known in Christendom, especially in a widow of twenty-one, for she is now but thirty-six. She has no black eunuchs for her guard, her husband being obliged to respect her as a queen, and not inquire at all into what is done in her apartment, where I was led into a large room, with a sofa the whole length of it, adorned with white marble pillars like a *ruelle*, covered with pale blue figured velvet on a silver ground, with cushions of the same, where I was desired to repose till the Sultana

appeared, who had contrived this manner of reception to avoid rising up at my entrance, though she made me an inclination of her head, when I rose up to her. I was very glad to observe a lady that had been distinguished by the favour of an emperor, to whom beauties were every day presented from all parts of the world. But she did not seem to me to have ever been half so beautiful as the fair Fatima I saw at Adrianople ; though she had the remains of a fine face, more decayed by sorrow than time. But her dress was something so surprisingly rich, I cannot forbear describing it to you. She wore a vest called *donalma*, and which differs from a *caftán* by longer sleeves, and folding over at the bottom. It was of purple cloth, straight to her shape, and thick set, on each side, down to her feet, and round the sleeves, with pearls of the best water, of the same size as their buttons commonly are. You must not suppose I mean as large as those of my Lord——, but about the bigness of a pea ; and to these buttons large loops of diamonds, in the form of those gold loops so common upon birth-day coats. This habit was tied, at the waist, with two large tassels of smaller pearl, and round the arms embroidered with large diamonds : her shift fastened at the bottom with a great diamond, shaped like a lozenge : her girdle as broad as the broadest English ribbon, entirely covered with diamonds. Round her neck she wore three chains, which reached to her knees : one of large pearl, at the bottom of which hung a fine coloured emerald, as big as a turkey-egg ; another, consisting of two hundred emeralds, close joined together, of the most lively green, perfectly matched, every one as large as a half-crown piece, and as thick as three crown pieces ; and another of small emeralds, perfectly

round. But her earrings eclipsed all the rest. They were two diamonds, shaped exactly like pears, as large as a big hazel-nut. Round her talpoche she had four strings of pearl, the whitest and most perfect in the world, at least enough to make four necklaces, every one as large as the Duchess of Marlborough's, and of the same size, fastened with two roses, consisting of a large ruby for the middle stone, and round them twenty drops of clean diamonds to each. Besides this, her head-dress was covered with bodkins of emeralds and diamonds. She wore large diamond bracelets, and had five rings on her fingers, all single diamonds, (except Mr. Pitt's) the largest I ever saw in my life. It is for jewellers to compute the value of these things; but, according to the common estimation of jewels in our part of the world, her whole dress must be worth above a hundred thousand pounds sterling. This I am very sure of, that no European queen has half the quantity; and the empress's jewels, though very fine, would look very mean near hers.

She gave me a dinner of fifty dishes of meat, which (after their fashion) were placed on the table but one at a time, and was extremely tedious. But the magnificence of her table answered very well to that of her dress. The knives were of gold, the hafts set with diamonds. But the piece of luxury that grieved my eyes was the table-cloth and napkins, which were all tiffany, embroidered with silks and gold, in the finest manner, in natural flowers. It was with the utmost regret that I made use of these costly napkins, as finely wrought as the finest handkerchiefs that ever came out of this country. You may be sure, that they were entirely spoiled before dinner was over. The sherbet

(which is the liquor they drink at meals) was served in china bowls; but the covers and salvers massy gold. After dinner, water was brought in a gold basin, and towels of the same kind of the napkins, which I very unwillingy wiped my hands upon; and coffee was served in china, with gold *soucoupes*.

The Sultana seemed in very good humour, and talked to me with the utmost civility. I did not omit this opportunity of learning all that I possibly could of the seraglio, which is so entirely unknown among us. She assured me that the story of the Sultan's throwing a handkerchief is altogether fabulous; and the manner upon that occasion, no other but that he sends the *kyslár agá*, to signify to the lady the honour he intends her. She is immediately complimented upon it by the others, and led to the bath, where she is perfumed and dressed in the most magnificent and becoming manner. The Emperor precedes his visit by a royal present, and then comes into her apartment: neither is there any such thing as her creeping in at the bed's foot. She said, that the first he made choice of was always after the first in rank, and not the mother of the eldest son, as other writers would make us believe. Sometimes the Sultan diverts himself in the company of all his ladies, who stand in a circle round him. And she confessed that they were ready to die with jealousy and envy of the happy she that he distinguished by any appearance of preference. But this seemed to me neither better nor worse than the circles in most courts, where the glance of the monarch is watched, and every smile waited for with impatience, and envied by those who cannot obtain it.

She never mentioned the Sultan without tears in her

eyes, yet she seemed very fond of the discourse. "My past happiness," said she, "appears a dream to me. Yet I cannot forget, that I was beloved by the greatest and most lovely of mankind. I was chosen from all the rest, to make all his campaigns with him ; I would not survive him, if I was not passionately fond of the princess my daughter. Yet all my tenderness for her was hardly enough to make me preserve my life. When I lost him, I passed a whole twelvemonth without seeing the light. Time has softened my despair ; yet I now pass some days every week in tears, devoted to the memory of my Sultan."

There was no affectation in these words. It was easy to see she was in a deep melancholy, though her good humour made her willing to divert me.

She asked me to walk in her garden, and one of her slaves immediately brought her a *pellice* of rich brocade lined with sables. I waited on her into the garden, which had nothing in it remarkable but the fountains ; and from thence she showed me all her apartments. In her bed-chamber her toilet was displayed, consisting of two looking-glasses, the frames covered with pearls, and her night *talpoche* set with bodkins of jewels, and near it three vests of fine sables, every one of which is, at least, worth a thousand dollars (two hundred pounds English money). I don't doubt these rich habits were purposely placed in sight, but they seemed negligently thrown on the sofa. When I took my leave of her, I was complimented with perfumes, as at the Grand Vizier's, and presented with a very fine embroidered handkerchief. Her slaves were to the number of thirty, besides ten little ones, the eldest not above seven years old. These were the most beautiful girls I ever saw, all

richly dressed ; and I observed that the Sultana took a great deal of pleasure in these lovely children, which is a vast expense ; for there is not a handsome girl of that age to be bought under a hundred pounds sterling. They wore little garlands of flowers, and their own hair, braided, which was all their head-dress ; but their habits all of gold stuffs. These served her coffee, kneeling ; brought water when she washed, etc. It is a great part of the business of the older slaves to take care of these girls, to learn them to embroider, and serve them as carefully as if they were children of the family.

Now, do I fancy that you imagine I have entertained you, all this while, with a relation that has, at least, received many embellishments from my hand ? This is but too like (say you) the Arabian Tales : these embroidered napkins ! and a jewel as large as a turkey's egg !—You forget, dear sister, those very tales were written by an author of this country, and (excepting the enchantments) are a real representation of the manners here. We travellers are in very hard circumstances : If we say nothing but what has been said before us, we are dull, and we have observed nothing. If we tell any thing new, we are laughed at as fabulous and romantic, not allowing for the difference of ranks, which afford difference of company, more curiosity, or the change of customs, that happen every twenty years in every country. But people judge of travellers exactly with the same candour, good nature, and impartiality, they judge of their neighbours upon all occasions. For my part, if I live to return amongst you, I am so well acquainted with the morals of all my dear friends and acquaintance, that I am resolved to tell them nothing at all, to avoid the imputation (which their charity

would certainly incline them to) of my telling too much. But I depend upon your knowing me enough to believe whatever I seriously assert for truth; though I give you leave to be surprised at an account so new to you.

But what would you say if I told you, that I have been in a harém, where the winter apartment was wainscoted with inlaid work of mother-of-pearl, ivory of different colours, and olive-wood, exactly like the little boxes you have seen brought out of this country; and those rooms designed for summer, the walls all crusted with japan china, the roofs gilt and the floors spread with the finest Persian carpets? Yet there is nothing more true; such is the palace of my lovely friend, the fair Fatima, whom I was acquainted with at Adrianople. I went to visit her yesterday; and, if possible, she appeared to be handsomer than before. She met me at the door of her chamber, and, giving me her hand with the best grace in the world—"You Christian ladies," said she, with a smile that made her as handsome as an angel, "have the reputation of inconstancy, and I did not expect, whatever goodness you expressed for me at Adrianople, that I should ever see you again. But I am now convinced that I have really the happiness of pleasing you; and, if you knew how I speak of you amongst our ladies, you would be assured that you do me justice if you think me your friend." She placed me in the corner of the sofa, and I spent the afternoon in her conversation, with the greatest pleasure in the world.

The Sultana Hafitén is, what one would naturally expect to find a Turkish lady, willing to oblige, but not knowing how to go about it; and it is easy to see in her manner, that she has lived secluded from the world.

But Fatima has all the politeness and good breeding of a court; with an air that inspires, at once, respect and tenderness; and now I understand her language, I find her wit as engaging as her beauty. She is very curious after the manners of other countries, and has not the partiality for her own, so common in little minds. A Greek that I carried with me, who had never seen her before (nor could have been admitted now, if she had not been in my train), shewed that surprise at her beauty and manner which is unavoidable at the first sight, and said to me in Italian, "This is no Turkish lady, she is certainly some Christian." Fatima guessed she spoke of her, and asked what she said. I would not have told, thinking she would have been no better pleased with the compliment than one of our court beauties to be told she had the air of a Turk; but the Greek lady told it her; and she smiled, saying, "It is not the first time I have heard so: my mother was a Poloneze, taken at the siege of Caminiec; and my father used to rally me, saying, He believed his Christian wife had found some Christian gallant; for I had not the air of a Turkish girl." I assured her, that, if all the Turkish ladies were like her, it was absolutely necessary to confine them from public view, for the repose of mankind; and proceeded to tell her what a noise such a face as hers would make in London or Paris. "I can't believe you," replied she, agreeably; "if beauty was so much valued in your country, as you say, they would never have suffered you to leave it." Perhaps, dear sister, you laugh at my vanity in repeating this compliment; but I only do it as I think it very well turned, and give it you as an instance of the spirit of her conversation.

Her house was magnificently furnished, and very

well fancied ; her winter rooms being furnished with figured velvet on gold grounds, and those for summer with fine Indian quilting embroidered with gold. The houses of the great Turkish ladies are kept clean with as much nicety as those in Holland. This was situated in a high part of the town ; and from the windows of her summer apartment we had the prospect of the sea, the islands, and the Asian mountains.

My letter is insensibly grown so long, I am ashamed of it. This is a very bad symptom. 'Tis well if I don't degenerate into a downright story-teller. It may be, our proverb, that knowledge is no burthen, may be true as to one's self, but knowing too much is very apt to make us troublesome to other people.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Bute

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

February 19, N.S. [1749].

My dear Child,—I gave you some general thoughts on the education of your children in my last letter ; but fearing you should think I neglected your request, by answering it with too much conciseness, I am resolved to add to it what little I know on that subject, and which may perhaps be useful to you in a concern with which you seem so nearly affected.

People commonly educate their children as they build their houses, according to some plan they think beautiful, without considering whether it is suited to the purposes for which they are designed. Almost all girls of quality are educated as if they were to be great ladies, which is often as little to be expected as an

immoderate heat of the sun in the north of Scotland. You should teach yours to confine their desires to probabilities, to be as useful as is possible to themselves, and to think privacy (as it is) the happiest state of life. I do not doubt you give them all the instructions necessary to form them to a virtuous life ; but 'tis a fatal mistake to do this without proper restrictions. Vices are often hid under the name of virtues, and the practice of them followed by the worst of consequences. Sincerity, friendship, piety, disinterestedness, and generosity, are all great virtues ; but, pursued without discretion, become criminal. I have seen ladies indulge their own ill-humour by being very rude and impertinent, and think they deserved approbation by saying I love to speak truth. One of your acquaintances made a ball the next day after her mother died, to show she was sincere. I believe your own reflection will furnish you with but too many examples of the ill-effects of the rest of the sentiments I have mentioned, when too warmly embraced. They are generally recommended to young people without limits or distinction, and this prejudice hurries them into great misfortunes, while they are applauding themselves in the noble practice (as they fancy) of very eminent virtues.

I cannot help adding (out of my real affection to you), I wish you would moderate that fondness you have for your children. I do not mean you should abate any part of your care, or not do your duty to them in its utmost extent : but I would have you early prepare yourself for disappointments, which are heavy in proportion to their being surprising. It is hardly possible, in such a number, that none should be unhappy ; prepare yourself against a misfortune of that kind. I

confess there is hardly any more difficult to support; yet it is certain imagination has a great share in the pain of it, and it is more in our power than it is commonly believed to soften whatever ills are founded or augmented by fancy. Strictly speaking, there is but one real evil—I mean, acute pain; all other complaints are so considerably diminished by time, that it is plain the grief is owing to our passion, since the sensation of it vanishes when that is over.

There is another mistake, I forgot to mention, usual in mothers: if any of their daughters are beauties, they take great pains to persuade them that they are ugly, or at least that they think so, which the young woman never fails to believe springs from envy, and is perhaps not much in the wrong. I would, if possible, give them a just notion of their figure, and show them how far it is valuable. Every advantage has its price, and may be either over or undervalued. It is the common doctrine of (what are called) good books, to inspire a contempt of beauty, riches, greatness, etc., which has done so much mischief among the young of our sex as an over-eager desire of them. They should look on these things as blessings where they are bestowed, though not necessaries that it is impossible to be happy without. I am persuaded the ruin of Lady F[rances] M[eadows] was in great measure owing to the notions given her by the silly good people that had the care of her. 'Tis true, her circumstances and your daughters' are very different: they should be taught to be content with privacy, and yet not neglect good fortune, if it should be offered them.

I am afraid, I have tired you with my instructions. I do not give them as believing my age has furnished me

with superior wisdom, but in compliance with your desire, and being fond of every opportunity that gives a proof of the tenderness with which I am ever

Your affectionate Mother.

I should be glad if you sent me the third volume of [Campbell's] Architecture, and with it any other entertaining books. I have seen the D[uches]s of M[arlborough]'s Memoirs, but should be glad of the "Apology for a late Resignation." As to the ale, 'tis now so late in the year, it is impossible it should come good. You do not mention your father; my last letter from him told me he intended soon for England. I am afraid several of mine to him have miscarried, though directed as he ordered. I have asked you so often the price of raw silk, that I am weary of repeating it. However, I once more beg that you would send me that information.

ESTHER VANHOMRIGH ("VANESSA") (1690–1723)

was of Dutch descent. She was living in London with her mother, a rich widow, when, in 1710, she became acquainted with Jonathan Swift. When he returned to Ireland, Swift corresponded with "Vanessa," which name she had now assumed; and although his attitude was rather that of a father than a lover, she grew distracted and conceived a violent passion for the Dean. His admiration, however, for "Stella" (Esther Johnson), and the rumour of his marriage to her, reached "Vanessa," who wrote to Stella for confirmation of the report. The letter was shown to Swift, who hastened in fury to the unhappy "Vanessa," and in silent rage flung the letter on a table before her, and rode off again. Vanessa died shortly afterwards from the effect of the shock of Swift's anger.

To Jonathan Swift

VANESSA'S LOVE-LETTERS

You bid me be easy, and you would see me as often as you could. You had better have said, as often as you could get the better of your inclinations so much, or as often as you remember there was such a one in the world. If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long. It is impossible to describe what I have suffered since I saw you last. I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing, killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more, but those resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long. For there is something in human nature that prompts one so to find relief in this world, I must give way to it, and beg you would see me, and speak kindly to me; for I am sure you would not condemn any one to suffer what I have done, could you but know it. The reason I write to you is, because I cannot tell it to you should I see you; for when I begin to complain, then you are angry, and there is something in your looks so awful, that it strikes me dumb. O! but that you may have but so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity! I say as little as ever I can; did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you to forgive me: and believe I cannot help telling you this and live.

Esther Vanhomrigh to Jonathan Swift

LONDON, *September* 1, 1712.

Had I a correspondent in China, I might have had an answer by this time. I never could think till now that

London was so far off in your thoughts, and that twenty miles were, by your computation, equal to some thousands. I thought it a piece of charity to undeceive you in this point, and to let you know, if you give yourself the trouble to write, I may probably receive your letter in a day: 'twas that made me venture to take pen in hand the third time. Sure you'll not let it be to no purpose. You must needs be extremely happy where you are, to forget absent friends; and I believe you have formed a new system, and think there is no more of this world, passing your sensible horizon. If this be your notion, I must excuse you; if not, you can plead no other excuse; and if it be, sir, I must reckon myself of another world; but I shall have much ado to be persuaded till you send me some convincing arguments of it. Don't dally in a thing of this consequence, but demonstrate that 'tis possible to keep up a correspondence between friends though in different worlds, and assure one another, as I do you, that I am your most obedient and most humble servant,

E. Vanhomrigh.

Esther Vanhomrigh to Jonathan Swift

—Cad—you are good beyond expression, and I will never quarrel again if I can help it; but, with submission, 'tis you that are so hard to be pleased, though you complain of me. I thought the last letter I wrote you was obscure and constrained enough. I took pains to write it after your manner; it would have been much easier for me to have wrote otherwise. I am not so unreasonable as to expect you should keep your word to a day, but six or seven days are great odds. Why

should your apprehensions for Molkin hinder you from writing to me? I think you should have wrote the sooner to have comforted me. Molkin is better, but in a very weak way. Though those who saw me told you nothing of my illness, I do assure you I was for twenty-four hours as ill as 'twas possible to be, and live. You wrong me when you say I did not find that you answered my questions to my satisfaction. What I said was, I had asked those questions as you bid, but could not find them answered to my satisfaction. How could they be answered in absence, since Somnus is not my friend? We have had a vast deal of thunder and lightning—where do you think I wished to be then? And do you think that was the only time I wished so since I saw you? I am sorry my jealousy should hinder you from writing more love-letters; for I must chide sometimes, and I wish I could gain by it at this instant, as I have done and hope to do. Is my dating my letter wrong the only sign of my being in love? Pray tell me, did not you wish to come where that road to the left would have led you? I am mightily pleased to hear you talk of being in a huff; 'tis the first time you ever told me so. I wish I could see you in one. I am now as happy as I can be without seeing—Cad. I beg you will continue happiness to your own Skinage.

A. G.

A. G. was at one time in the service of Mr. Granville, a relative of Mrs. Delany. In these letters she is writing to a friend in his service at Calwich. There is no clue to her identity, but her letters are curious and entertaining and show considerable interest in current affairs

To her friend Martha, at Calwich

THE WESTMINSTER FOX

December 12, 1745.

Indeed, my good friend Martha, you send me so many fine presents that I shall blind myself with thanking you, or what will be almost as bad, kill myself with eating them. Such a turkey! O how monstrously I did eate, and to be sure it lasted me more meals than one; though I did give Mrs. Donellan a bitt. She sends her compliments to master, and desires you will tell him that he is sadly wanted in town, and upon my word I long to see him more than I will say. We have terible cold weather; I have been half froze. I realy think I shou'd not have lived last week if you had not sent me the good turkey to eate: it kept the frost out of my stomach. I honour Toby for killing so many ratts, and I am rejoyed to think the fox is killed; I wish you could kill ten more, and then the skins would make me a gown. But can you tell me how you catched him, for *here* is the greatest devil of a fox at present hanging about St. George's and Westminster that was ever known anywhere; he destroys everything he comes near, beast and bird; some people think he has brought to his den the very king of beasts; he does not kill them all, for he could not eate so many, but he *makes them destroy one another*. He has a cunning way of drawing them all about him, and they say he has a kind of glittering dust in his brush that he shakes when they are near him, and the dust flies into all their eyes, and from that time they do nothing but devour and eate one another, and he does not forget to make them

bring tit-bitts and good morsels to put in his own maw. He has been hunted these two or three winters furiously, traps and gins of all sorts set, but he has not yet been catched. Now, dear Martha, if you can put me in a way how to catch him I wou'd cut off his tail and put an end to his shaking that cursed shining dust about, and pull out both his eyes, then you and I wou'd carry him about for a shew; we shou'd get a power of money by him at sixpence a piece. I am told there is not one county in England where he has not sent some of his own breed to, and has given them some of this more than accursed dust, with which they do more mischief than any beast alive has ever done. Maybe it is one of them you have killed for fear it shou'd burry his brush deep in the earth for fear of this same dust; and have a care of your own eyes, and I beg master will take care of his, for they say it may do Christians' eyes harm as well as others.

The King of Prussia is well, and going into winter quarters: he says *he will knock all their heads together* in the spring, and *I hope he will.*

I have no news. My duty to master, and tel him I prodigously wish he wou'd come to town this bad weather. I hope you will take care and keep yourself warm this winter. Mrs. Donellan is remembered to you, and I am,

Dear Martha, sincerely yours,

A. G.

A. G. to her friend Martha at Calwich

HOT WEATHER RECIPES

August 1745.

Indeed, my good friend Martha, it has been a deadly while I have taken to answer your kind letter, but

what can a body doe with one eye, and that a very bad one. Moreover, my hand shakes like any aspen leafe, and I have not been well all summer. I have a pain in my shoulder on one side, and a pain in my elbow on the other; much pain and very lame of my knees, and ankcles; when I walk, it is like an elephant, without bending a joint. O how I grunt and groan night and day! I will take my oath I would rather be an otter than an old woman; but you do not know what it is to be old! You are capering about in your fine cardinals, and things, like a girl of twenty. I suppose you are about geting a good husband. I was told so, and much good may it doe you, if he gives you a hearty thrashing now and then. I wish you wou'd tell me who he is; write me word what his name is. But I hope this affair do not make you forget the dear piggs, and turkeys, and geese and ducks, send me word if they be in good heart and thriving. And what is master doing? Is he smothered amongst the lime and bricks? or has he got his work done, and laid himself down upon the gazy hill, to take breath a little? This furious hott weather—I never felt such in my life. Tel him, that is, if he have outlived it that I have thought forty times to come to Calwich, and live in the river amongst the otters, and lye titely with them and try whether they or I should eat the most carps; and I believe I should have come, if a thought had not changed in my head, that there might come at once a hundred about me, and eate me up, in stead of a perch. You know I am a little slimikin thing, not unlike a perch or an eel, both which they like, and might easily misstake and pick my bones in a moment; so I chous to stay and be broyled at Ful-

ham. But I have been so taken up with your intended marriage, and my owne history, that I have not said a word of Mrs. Donellan, who is nearer my heart than any other thing; even the King, his owne self I do not love half so well! Ask master if that be not saying a great deal, and tell him, as he remembers he left her much out of order in London, that she grew worse every day till we came to Fulham. At that time she was scarce able to get on horse back; however, she did, and rid every day, with which she mended considerably til the violent hott wether came, which made it impossible for any body to ride, the heat and the dust was so powerfull. She has not been on horse back near a month, and is not so well; very restless nights, and her cough bad. Thank God, yesterday the weather changed, and brought us some rain, not before it was wanted, for this part of the world was quite burned up; no grass to be seen, but the corn extreme fine, and ready to reap. If it please God to send us a good harvest we shall have great plenty of that. How has the season been with you? Have you any fruit? We have not as much as curans fitt to make a little wine with. Well, I wish you wou'd let me know what master is doing. Has he finished his house, done all he has to doe, and got rid of his workmen? Surely, I thought, he wou'd have been in London before now, and have got a new gown on purpose, thinking to see all the prime youth of Staffordshire review'd in Hyed Park, with Colonel Granville at the head of them—such a day! So I went; but when I found it was the Norfolk Militia, how was I mortifyed, though they were fine men, and very fine officers! But what did I care for them? I wanted

to have seen master ! and now they tell me your militia are not yet raised. Good luck ! good luck ! What is it you mean to be so doul ? I realy believe in my heart master do not care if the French coms and eate us all up alive. Is there not flat boats—I know not how many thousands—ready to come every day ? and when they once set out they will be with us as quick as a swallow can fly, almost ; and when they land we have no body to fight them, because you *will not rais* your militia. For my part I dare not go to the Thames, for feare they shou'd be coming ; and if I see one of our own boats leaden with *carrats*, I am ready to drop down, thinking it one of the French. I have not one word of news, but that it is grown cooler to my great joye. Mrs. Donellan is got on horse back again, and I hope it will doe her good. She sends master her most kind compliments, and I hope he will accept of a thousand good wishes of mine, which coms to him heartily. Mrs. Donellan remembers you kindly, and I hope dear Martha will believe that

I am, her true old friend,

A. G.

ELIZABETH MONTAGU (1720-1800)

was the daughter of Mr. Robinson a Yorkshire squire, and the wife of Mr. Montagu, grandson of the Earl of Sandwich. She was famed for the literary gatherings at her house, where conversation took the place of card-playing—an innovation at once imitated by her friends. Mrs. Montagu was one of the original "blue-stocking" circle, and the term first originated at one of her assemblies. She delighed in entertaining the lions of her time, as well as little chimney-

sweeps. She wrote an essay on Shakespeare and belonged to Dr. Johnson's circle.

To the Duchess of Portland

MATRIMONIAL PROSPECTS

HORTON, *December* 1738.

MADAM,—I cannot possibly show a greater regard to your Grace's commands, than by obeying them in the strictest sense; therefore as you desired me to write to you soon, I have written the soonest that was possible.

I arrived at Mount Morris rather more fond of society than solitude. I thought it as very agreeable change of scene from Handel and Gaffarelli, to woodlarks and nightingales, it seems to me to be something like the different seasons of youth and age; first, noise and public shew, and then after being convinced that is vanity, retirement to shades and solitude, which we soon find to be vexation of spirit. I think Solomon was in the wrong when he said all was vanity and vexation of spirit; for the one succeeds the other, as darkness does light, and especially in the women; the young maid is all vanity, and the old one all vexation. The same cheek which when blooming was the woman's vanity, when wrinkled becomes her vexation; but everything has its use; were it not for wrinkles, what prudent maxims should we lose which now instruct us? what scandals which divert us? for old maids have nothing to do but to shew their own prudence and other people's follies. You see how sententious I am grown only by a fortnight's retirement from the world. When the world has left me I shall speak only in proverbs,

for if these things are done in a green tree what shall be done in a dry ? Sir F. D ——'s sister is to be married to Sir R——t A——h, a baronet of our county ; if the size of his estate bore any proportion to the bulk of his carcass, he would be one of the greatest matches in England, but unhappily for her, the first is as remarkably small as the other is large ; so all she is to get for six thousand pounds is a fat man, a lean estate, and a trumpery title. Indeed a lady may make her lover languish till he is of the size she most likes ; if she should waste him an ell in circumference, he would be almost as slim a man as Sir John C——n. At present you would take him for a descendant of Gog and Magog. As it is not now the fashion for men to die for love, the only thing a woman can do to give herself a reputation is to bring a man into a consumption. What triumph then must attend the lady who reduces Sir R. A——to asses' milk ! Queen Omphale made Hercules spin, but greater glory waits the lady who makes Sir A—— lean.

I hope your Grace will favour me with a letter soon ; to write to you from hence would be extremely like Swift's country post of news from the hen roost. I told my papa how much he laid under your Grace's displeasure for hurrying out of town ; but what is a fine lady's anger, or the loss of London to five-and-forty ? They are more afraid of an easterly wind than a frown when they are of that age. My mamma and sister desire their compliments. I hope the Marquis of Titchfield is well.

I am, Madam,
Your most humble servant,
Eliz. Robinson.

Elizabeth Robinson (Mrs. Montagu) to the Duchess of Portland

CONVERSATION AT BATH

BATH, *January* 4, 1740.

MADAM,—As a whole fortnight has elapsed without your Grace's bestowing any new favour upon me, I really believe you have entirely forgotten there is a forlorn Fidget in the world. I can hardly say she lives, while she is so far from you; but she eats, drinks, sleeps, coughs, and sneezes, which are all the signs of life some people have, and indeed is very nearly as much alive as anybody here. I wish your Grace would consider that Bath water is not Helicon and affords no inspiration; and that there is no place where one stands in greater need of something to enliven the brain and inspire the imagination. I hear every day of people's pumping their arms or legs for the rheumatism, but the pumping for wit is one of the hardest and most fruitless labours in the world. I should be glad to send you some news, but all the news of the place would be like the bills of mortality: palsey, four; gout, six; fever, one; etc., etc. We hear of nothing but Mr. Such-a-one is not abroad to-day? Oh! no, says another, poor gentleman, he died to-day. Then another cries, My party was made for quadrille to-night, but one of the gentlemen has had a second stroke of the palsey, and cannot come out. There is no depending upon people, nobody minds engagements. Indeed the only thing one can do to-day we did not do the day before is to die: not that I would be hurried by a love of variety and novelty to do so irreparable a thing as dying. To shew you how loth I am even to dance

a step towards it, I will tell your Grace that I staid away last night from the ball, because I had a cold. I shall be always glad to live while I can see you. I do not expect to see such another, for that might require the age of an antediluvian.

I am, Madam,
Your Grace's most obedient servant,
E. Robinson.

Elizabeth Robinson (Mrs. Montagu) to Rev. Dr. Shaw, F.R.S.[1]

A MATRIMONIAL HOMILY

[1742]

Rev. Sir,—You will perhaps think me rather too hasty in my congratulations if I wish you joy of being going to be married, whereas it is generally usual to stay till people really are so before we offer to make our compliments. But joy is a very transitory thing, therefore I am willing to seize on the first occasion; and, as I imagine you are glad you are going to be married, I wish you joy of that gladness; for whether you will be glad after you are married is more than mortal wight can determine; and having prepared myself to rejoice with you, I should be loth to defer writing till, perhaps, you were become sorrowful. I must therefore in prudence prevent your espousals. I would not have you imagine I shall treat matrimony in a ludicrous manner; it is impossible for a man who, alas! has had two wives, to look upon it as a

[1] This anonymous letter was written by Miss Robinson and sent to Dr. Shaw the traveller, at the instigation, and for the amusement of, the Duchess of Portland and her society.

jest, or think it a light thing; indeed, it has several advantages over a single life. You, that have made many voyages, know that a tempest is better than a dead calm; and matrimony teaches many excellent lessons, particularly patience and submission, and brings with it all the advantages of reproof, and the great profit of remonstrances. These indeed are only temporal benefits; but besides, any wife will save you from purgatory, and a diligent will secure heaven to you. If you would atone for your sins, and do a work meet for repentance, *marry*. Some people wonder how Cupid has been able to wound a person of your prowess; you, who wept not with the crocodile, listened not to the Sirens, stared the basilisk in the face, whistled to the rattle-snake, went to the masquerade with Proteus, danced the hays with Scylla and Charybdis, taught the dog of the Nile to fetch and carry, waked cheek by jowl with a lion, made an intimacy with a tiger, wrestled with a bear, and, in short, have lived like an owl in the desert or a pelican in the wilderness; after defying monsters so furious and fell, that you should be overcome by an arrow out of a little urchin's quiver is amazing! Have you not beheld the mummies of the beauteous Cleopatra, and of the fair consorts of the Ptolemies, without one amorous sigh! And now to fall a victim to a mere modern human widow is most unworthy of you! What qualities has a woman that you have not vanquished? Her tears are not more apt to betray than those of the crocodile, she is hardly as deceitful as the Siren, less deadly, I believe, than the basilisk or rattle-snake, scarce as changeable as Proteus, nor more dangerous than Scylla and Charibids, as docile and faithful as the dog of the Nile,

sociable as the lion, and mild, sure, as the tiger! As her qualities are not more deadly than those of the animals you have despised, what is it that has conquered you? Can it be her beauty? Is she as handsome as the empress of the woods? as well accommodated as the many-chambered sailer? or as skilful as the nautilus? You will find many a creature by earth, air, and water, that is more beautiful than a woman; but indeed she is composed of all elements, and

Fire, water, woman, are man's ruin,
And great's thy danger, Thomas Bruin.

But you will tell me she has all the beauties in nature united in her person, as ivory in her forehead, diamonds in her eyes, etc., etc.

But where's the sense, direct or moral
That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral?

If she be a dowdy what can you do with her? If she be a beauty what will she do for you? A man of your profession might know the lilies of the field toil not, neither do they spin. If she is rich she won't buy you. If she is poor I don't see why she should borrow you. But, I fear, I am advising in vain while your heart, like a fritter, is frying in fat in Cupid's flames. How frail and weak is flesh! else, sure, so much might have kept in one little heart. Had Cupid struck the lean or the melancholy I had not lamented; but true Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, merry Jack Falstaff, *fat Jack* Falstaff, beware the foul fiend—they call it marriage—beware on't. As what I have advanced on the subject of matrimony is absolutely unanswerable, I need not tell you where to direct a

letter for me, nor will I, in my pride, declare who I am that give you this excellent counsel; but, that you may not despair of knowing where to address your thanks for such an extraordinary favour, I will promise, that before you find a courtier without deceit, a patriot without spleen, a lawyer without quibble, a philosopher without pride, a wit without vanity, a fool without presumption, or any man without conceit, you shall find the true name of

Your well-wisher,
And faithful counsellor,

Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland

A COUNTRY EXCURSION

TUNBRIDGE, 1745.

DEAR MADAM,—I hope your Grace is sensible I should write oftener if it was consistent with drinking these waters; but really it is very inconvenient to apply a head to any business that cannot think without aching. I am not singular in this, for many people affirm thinking to be a pain at all times; I have more discretion than to declare as much anywhere but at Tunbridge. I have been in the vapours these two days, on account of Dr. Young's leaving us; he was so good as to let me have his company very often, and we used to ride, walk, and take sweet counsel together; a few days before he went away he carried Mrs. Rolt and myself to Tonbridge, five miles from hence, where we were to see some fine old ruins; but the manner of the journey was admirable, nor did I, at the end of it, admire the object we went to observe

more than the means by which we saw it. . . . First rode the Doctor on a tall steed, decently caparisoned in dark gray; next ambled Mrs. Rolt, on a hackney horse, lean as the famed Rozinante, but in shape much resembling Sancho's ass; then followed your humble servant on a milk-white palfrey, whose reverence for the human kind induced him to be governed by a creature not half as strong, and, I fear, scarce twice as wise as himself. By this enthusiasm of his, rather than my own skill, I rode on in safety, and at leisure, to observe the company; especially the two figures that brought up the rear. The first was my servant, valiantly armed with two uncharged pistols, whose holsters were covered with two civil, harmless monsters that signified the valour and courtesy of our ancestors. The last was the Doctor's man, whose uncombed hair so resembled the mane of the horse he rode, one could not help imagining they were of kin, and wishing that for the honour of the family they had had one comb betwixt them; on his head was a velvet cap, much resembling a black saucepan, and on his side hung a little basket. Thus did we ride, or rather jog on, to Tonbridge town, which is five miles from the Wells. To tell you how the dogs barked at us, the children squalled, and the men and women stared, would take up too much time; let it suffice, that not even a tame magpie or caged starling let us pass unnoted. At last we arrived at the King's Head, where the loyalty of the Doctor induced him to alight, and then, knight-errant-like, he took his damsels from off their palfreys, and courteously handed us into the inn. We took this progress to see the ruins of an old castle; but first our divine would visit the churchyard, where we

read that folks were born and died, the natural, moral, and physical history of mankind. In the churchyard grazed the parson's steed, whose back was worn bare with carrying a pillion-seat for the comely, fat personage, this ecclesiastic's wife; and though the creature eat daily part of the parish, he was most miserably lean. Tired of the dead and living bones, Mrs. Rolt and I jumped over a stile, into the parson's field, and from thence, allured by the sight of golden pippins, we made an attempt to break into the holy man's orchard. He came most courteously to us, and invited us to his apple-trees; to shew our moderation, we each of us gathered two mellow codlings, one of which I put into my pocket, from whence it sent forth a smell that I uncharitably supposed to proceed from the Doctor's servant, as he waited behind me at dinner. The good parson offered to shew us the inside of his church, but made some apology for his undress, which was a true canonical *déshabille*. He had on a grey striped calamanco nightgown, a wig that once was white, but, by the influence of an uncertain climate, turned to a pale orange, a brown hat, encompassed by a black hat-band, a band, somewhat dirty, that decently retired under the shadow of his chin, a pair of grey stockings, well mended with blue worsted—strong symptom of the conjugal care and affection of his wife, who had mended his hose with the very worsted she bought for her own. What an instance of exalted friendship, and how uncommon in a degenerate age!

How rare meet now such pairs, in love and honour join'd! When we had seen the church, the parson invited us to take some refreshment at his house, but Dr. Young thought we had before enough trespassed

on the good man's time, so desired to be excused, else we should no doubt have been welcomed to the house by Madame, in her muslin pinners, and sarsanet hood, who would have given us some mead, and a piece of a cake that she had made in the Whitsun holidays to treat her cousins. However, Dr. Young, who would not be outdone in good offices, invited the divine to our inn, where we went to dinner; but he excused himself, and came after the meal was over, in hopes of smoking a pipe, but our Doctor hinted to him that it would not be proper to offer any incense but sweet praise, to such goddesses as Mrs. Rolt and your humble servant. To say the truth, I saw a large horn tobacco box, with Queen Anne's head upon it, peeping out of his pocket, but I did not care to take the hint and desire him to put in use that magnificent piece of furniture. . . .

It was late in the evening before we got home, but the silver Cynthia held up her lamp in the heavens, and cast such a light on the earth as shewed its beauties in a soft and gentle light. The night silenced all but our divine Doctor, who sometimes uttered things fit to be spoken in a season when all nature seems to be hushed and hearkening. I followed, gathering wisdom as I went; till I found, by my horse's stumbling, that I was in a bad road, and that the blind was leading the blind; so I placed my servant between the Dr. and myself, which he not perceiving, went on in a most philosophical strain, to the great amazement of my poor clown of a servant, who not being wrought up to any pitch of enthusiasm, nor making any answer at all to all the fine things he heard, the Doctor wondering I was dumb, and grieving I was so stupid, looked round,

declaring his surprize, and desired the man to trot on before; and thus did we return to Tunbridge Wells.

I am, Madam,

Your Grace's most affectionate and obedient

E. MONTAGU.

Elizabeth Montagu to the Duchess of Portland

TAKING THE CURE

BATH, 1748.

MADAM,—I thank your Grace a thousand times for your kind letter; but why will my Lord Duke persevere in the gout? Pray tell his Grace it is a shame he should use a crutch while his grand-mamma trips like a roe-buck; she has been more than parboiled in Medea's kettle, and without the help of a Jason too, without which few dowagers look so snug. Mrs. Honywood has lost her new husband; the Fates will make her a widow, in spite of her haste to be a wife. . . . We are too dull here to furnish any news or scandal. Whisk, and the noble game of E.O., employ the evening; three glasses of water, a toasted roll, a Bath cake, and a cold walk, the mornings. I cannot say I have yet dared to cast a hope towards London; my physician says three months will be necessary for me to drink the waters. My constitution may perhaps be still more tardy; I have yet been here but about five weeks, so half my time is not expired. . . . I am forced to dine by myself, not being yet able to bear the smell of what common mortals call a dinner; as yet I live with the fairies. I am much obliged to those who told your Grace I was coming to town, as they said something I should be glad to have true; but here is another

Miss Montagu who is like me, hath a long nose, a pale face, thin cheeks, and also, I believe, diets with fairies, and she is much better than when she came, and many people give me the honour of her recovery.

I am, Madam,
Your Grace's most obliged, most faithful
E. M.

Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter

PUBLIC SPECTACLES

[1760.]

. . . I have long been sorry to see the best of our sex running continually after public spectacles and diversions, to the ruin of their health and understandings, and neglect of all domestic duties; but I own the late instance of their going to hear Lord Ferrers's sentence particularly provoked me. The ladies crowded to the House of Lords to see a wretch brought loaded with crime and shame to the bar, to hear sentence of a cruel and ignominious death, which, considering only this world, cast shame back on his ancestors, and all his succeeding family. There was in this case everything that could disgrace human nature and civil distinctions; but it was a sight, and in spite of all pretence to tenderness and delicacy, they were adorned with jewels, and laughing and gay, to see their fellow-creature in the most horrid situation, making a sad end of this life, and in fearful expectation of the commencement of another. These ladies would be angry if one could suppose they would delight to see the blows and cuts boxers or back-sword champions give each other, yet honour, spirit, and courage animate

these combatants; nothing but a criminal insensibility, the most wicked hardness of heart, could support Lord Ferrers under his crime and disgrace. Can one wonder that mistaken piety can make people spectators of the horrors of an *auto-da-fé*, when the love of spectacles can carry women to see a murderer receive sentence? If I had been one of his judges I should have submitted to the pain of passing sentence; but if justice does not call one to a scene of punishment, what could induce one to be present at it? You will believe Mrs. Modish was there, though she does not mention it. . . . Adieu, dear Madam; believe me most affectionately and tenderly yours,

E. MONTAGU.

MARY DELANY (1700–1788)

NÉE Granville, was niece of Lord Lansdowne. She married first Alexander Pendarves, and secondly Dean Patrick Delany (Swift's friend and biographer), who is sometimes alluded to in her correspondence as D.D. After his death, Mrs. Delany lived in England, where she was well-known for her "paper-mosaics." She died at Windsor, and her Life and Correspondence was published in 6 vols. (1861–1862). The Coronation described in the following letter was that of George. II

Mary Pendarves (Mrs. Delany) to her sister, Mrs. Anne Granville

THE CORONATION

SOMERSET HOUSE, *the day after the Coronation* [1727].

You require a full and true account of all the pomp I saw yesterday. I cannot say my dearest sister is

unreasonable, but how can I answer your demands? No words (at least that I can command) can describe the magnificence my eyes beheld. The book I sent you informs you of all the ceremony and manner of proceeding. I was a spectator in Westminster Hall, from whence the procession begun, and after their Majesties were crowned they returned with all their noble followers to dine. The dresses of the ladies were becoming, and most of them immensely rich. Lady Delawar was one of the best figures; the Duchess of Queensborough depended so much upon her native beauty that she despised all adornments, nor had not one jewel, riband, or puff to set her off, but everybody thought she did *not* appear to advantage. The Duchess of Richmond pleased everybody; she looked easy and genteel, with the most sweetness in her countenance imaginable.

The Queen never was so well liked; her clothes were extravagantly fine, though they did not make show enough for the occasion, but she walked gracefully and smiled on all as she passed by. Lady Fanny Nassau (who was one of the ladies that bore up the train) looked exceeding well; her clothes were fine and very becoming, pink colour satin the gown (which was stiff-bodied), embroidered with silver, the petticoat covered with a trimming answerable. Princess Anne and her two sisters held up the tip of the train; they were dressed in stiff-bodied gowns of silver tissue, embroidered or quite covered with silver trimming, with diadems upon their heads, and purple mantles edged with ermine, and vast long trains; they were very prettily dressed, and looked very well. After them walked the Duchess of Dorset and Lady Sussex,

two ladies of the bedchamber-in-waiting; then the two finest figures of all the procession—Mrs. Herbert and Mrs. Howard, the bedchamber-women-in-waiting, in gowns also, but so rich, so genteel, so perfectly well dressed, that any description must do them an injury. Mrs. Herbert's was blue and silver, with a rich embossed trimming; Mrs. Howard's scarlet and silver, trimmed in the same manner, their heads with long locks and puffs and silver riband.

I could hardly see the King, for he walked so much *under* his canopy that he was almost hid from me by the people that surrounded him; but though the Queen was also under a canopy, she walked so forward that she was distinguished by everybody. The room was finely illuminated, and though there was 1,800 candles, besides what were on the tables, they were all lighted in less than three minutes by an invention of Mr. Heideggen's, which succeeded to the admiration of all spectators; the branches that held the candles were all gilt and in the form of pyramids.

We went to the Hall at half-an-hour after four in the morning; but when we came the doors were not opened, and we were forced to go into a coffee-house, and staid till the doors opened, which at half-an-hour after seven they brought us word they were. We then sallied forth with a grenadier for a guide; he conveyed us into so violent a crowd that for some minutes I lost my breath (and my cloak I doubt for ever). I verily believe I should have been squeezed as flat as a pancake if Providence had not sent Mr. Edward Stanley to my relief, and he, being a person of some authority, made way for me, and I got to a good place in the Hall without any other damage than a few bruises on my arms

and the loss of my cloak; and extreamely frighted with the mob, so much that all I saw was a poor recompense for what my spirits had suffered.

Mary Pendarves (Mrs. Delany) to Dean Swift

MR. POPE'S ACCIDENT

September 2, 1736.

Sir,—I never will accept of the writ of ease you threaten me with; do not flatter yourself with any such hopes: I receive too many advantages from your letters to drop a correspondence of such consequence to me. I am really grieved that you are so much persecuted with a giddiness in your head; the Bath and travelling would certainly be of use to you. Your want of spirits is a new complaint, and what will not only afflict your particular friends, but every one that has the happiness of your acquaintance.

I am uneasy to know how to do, and have no other means for that satisfaction but from your own hand; most of my Dublin correspondents being removed to Cork, to Wicklow mountains, and the Lord knows where. I should have made this enquiry sooner, but that I have this summer undertaken a work that has given me full employment, which is *making a grotto* in Sir John Stanley's garden at North End, and it is chiefly composed of shells I had from Ireland. My life for two months past has been very like a hermit's; I have had all the comforts of life but society, and have found living quite alone a pleasanter thing than I imagined. The hours I could spend in reading have been entertained by Rollins' "History of the Ancients"

in French: I am very well pleased with it, and think your Hannibals, Scipios, and Cyruses prettier fellows than are to be met with nowadays. Painting and music have had their share in my amusements. I rose between five and six, and went to bed at eleven. I would not tell you so much about myself if I had anything to tell you of other people. I came to town the night before last, but if it does not, a few days hence, appear better to me than at present, I shall return to my solitary cell. Sir John Stanley has been all the summer at Tunbridge.

I suppose you may have heard of Mr. Pope's accident, which had liked to have proved a very fatal one. He was leading a young lady into a boat from his own stairs; her foot missed the side of the boat; she fell into the middle of the water, and pulled Mr. Pope after her; the boat slipped away, and they were immediately out of their depth, and it was with some difficulty they were saved. The young lady's name is Talbot; she is as remarkable for being a handsome woman as Mr. Pope is for wit. I think I cannot give you a higher notion of her beauty, *unless* I had *named you* instead of *him*. I shall be impatient till I hear from you again; being, with great sincerity, Sir,

Your most faithful, humble servant,

M. PENDARVES.

P.S.—I forgot to answer on the other side that part of your letter which concerns my sister. I do *not know* whether you would like her person as well as mine, because illness has faded her complexion, but it is greatly my interest *not* to bring you acquainted with her *mind*, for that would prove a potent rival,

and nothing but your partiality to me as an older acquaintance could make you give me the preference.

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

DOMESTIC REMEDIES

CLARGES STREET, *March* 1, 1743.

. . . I am very much concerned for my dear godson, but hope before this reaches you that his ague will have left him. Two *infallible receipts* I must insert before I proceed further. 1st, Pounded ginger, made into a paste with brandy, spread on sheep's leather, and a plaister of it laid over the stomach. 2ndly. A spider put into a goose-quill, well sealed and secured, and hung about the child's neck as low as the pit of his stomach. Either of these, I am assured, will ease. *Probatum est.* . . . Adieu.

M. D.

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GARDEN

DELVILLE, *July* 19, 1744.

. . . I wish I could give you an idea of our garden, but the describing it puzzles me extremely; the back part of the house is towards a bowling-green, that slopes gently off down to a little brook that runs through the garden; on the other side of the brook is a high bank with a hanging wood of evergreens, at the top of which is a circular terrace that surrounds the greatest part of the garden, the wall of which is covered with

fruit-trees and on the other side of the walk a border for flowers, and the greatest quantity of roses and sweetbrier that ever I saw; on the right hand of the bowling-green towards the bottom is placed our hay-rick, which is at present making, and from our parlour-window and bedchamber I can see them work at it, and have a full view of what I have described; and beyond that pleasant meadows, bounded by mountains of various shapes, with little villages and country-seats interspersed and embosomed high in tufted trees: to complete the prospect a full view of Dublin harbour, which is always full of shipping, and looks at this instant beautiful beyond all description: these are the views from the house *next* the gardens. On the left hand of the bowling-green is a terrace-walk that takes in a sort of a parterre, that will make the prettiest orangery in the world, for it is an oval of green, planted round in double rows of elm-trees and flowering shrubs, with little grass walks between them, which will give a good shelter to exotics. The terrace I just mentioned is bounded at one end by a wall of good fruit, in which there is a door that leads to another very large handsome terrace-walk, with double rows of large elms, and the walk well gravelled, so that we may walk securely in any weather. On the left hand the ground rises very considerably, and is planted with all sorts of trees. About half-way up the walk there is a path that goes up that bank to the remains of an old castle (as it were), from whence there is an unbounded prospect all over the country; under it is a cave that opens with an arch to the terrace-walk, that will make a very pretty grotto; and the plan I had laid for my brother's at Calwich (this being of that shape, though

not quite so large) I shall execute here. At the end of this terrace is a very pretty portico, prettily painted within and neatly finished without; you go up a high slope to it, which gives it a mighty good air as you come up the walk: from thence you go on the right hand to the green terrace I mentioned at first, which takes in the whole compass of this garden; in the middle, sloping from the terrace, every way, are the fields, or rather paddocks, where our deer and our cows are kept, and the rurality of it is wonderfully pretty. These fields are planted in a *wild way* with *forest-trees and with bushes*, that look so naturally you would not imagine it the work of art. Besides this, there is a very good kitchen-garden and two fruit-gardens, which, when proper repairs are made and they are set in order, will afford us a sufficient quantity of everything we can want of that kind. There are several prettineses I can't explain to you—little wild walks, private seats, and lovely prospects. One seat particularly I am very fond of, in a nut grove, and "*the beggar's hat*," which is a seat in a rock; on the top are bushes of all kinds, that bend over: it is placed at the end of a cunning, wild path thick-set with trees, and it overlooks the brook, which entertains you with a purling rill. The little robins are as fond of this seat as we are; it just holds the Dean and myself, and I hope in God to have many a *tête-à-tête* there with my own dear sister; but I have had such a hurry of business within doors, and so many visitors, that I have not spent half so much time in this sweet garden as I want to do . . . I must finish with assuring you of D[ean] D[elany's] tender regard and my everlasting love.

M. D.

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

THE FAT OF THE LAND

[No Date.]

How I could run on, but must not. I am called to range dishes on my table, which is a long one, and consequently easier to set out than a round or oval one. The table takes seven dishes in length. Here follows my bill of fare for to-day; is not this ridiculous? But if you *wander still unseen*, it may serve as an amusement in your retirement.

FIRST COURSE.	SECOND COURSE.
Turkeys *endore*.[1]	Partridge.
Boyled neck of mutton.	Sweetbreads.
Greens, etc.	Collared pig.
Soup.	Creamed apple-tart.
Plum-pudding.	Crabs.
Roast loin of veal.	Fricasse of eggs.
Venison pasty.	Pigeons.

No dessert to be had.

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

SEDAN-CHAIR DANGERS

Pall Mall, *January* 21, 1746.

. . . Monday I spent the day at Whitehall setting *our Queen's* jewels, and yesterday we made our appearance at Leicester House. The Duchess of Portland was in white satin, the petticoat ruffled, and robings and facings. She had *all* her fine jewels on, and looked

[1] Endive.

handsomer than ever I saw her look in my life, and in my eyes outshone in every respect all the blazing stars of the Court. There was not much new finery, new clothes not being required on this Birthday. They curl and wear a great many *tawdry* things, but there is such a variety in the manner of dress, that I don't know what to tell you is the fashion; the only thing that seems general are hoops of an enormous size, and most people wear vast winkers to their heads. They are now come to such an extravagance in those two particulars, that I expect soon to see the other extreme of thread-paper heads and no hoops, and from appearing like so many *blown bladders* we shall look like so many bodkins stalking about.

. . . Coming out from the house, as soon as I got into my chair, the chairman fairly overturned it,—*fairly* I may say, for not a glass was broken nor was I the least hurt; I own I was a little terrified, and Lord Westmoreland, hearing a bustle at the door, found me *topsy-turvy*. He insisted on my getting out of my chair, which I did, drank a glass of water, sat half an hour in his library, and went on to Lady Frances Carteret. . . .

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

EARLY DEPRAVITY

DELVILLE, *January* 26, 1752.

. . . Yesterday morning sent the coach for Mrs. Hamilton, etc. to Finglass; we all sat down to our different work, and the morning past away in a tranquil pleasantness. Just before dinner when I was dressed

I walked into the parlour to see that all things were as I would have them. I found Master Hamilton sitting on the sofa pale as death. I took him by the hand, terrified at his looks, and found he was dirty, and looked as if he had had a fall; he could hardly speak, but would not own he had. I desired him to go and get one of the servants to clean his coat; he went stumbling along, which confirmed me he was hurt, and I desired D. D. to follow him and try if he could find out what was the matter before his mama saw him. In the meantime the ladies came down, and I was so confounded and surprised I hardly knew what I said; however, I desired them to sit down, dinner being on the table, and D. D. came in with Master H., who with difficulty seated himself. His mother instantly saw something was very wrong, ran to him, imagining he had had a fall and had fractured his skull, and we ordered William, our butler, to take a horse and go instantly for a surgeon, for the boy could neither speak nor keep his seat, and his poor mother's agony was most affecting. But William whispered me, and said, "Madam, Master drank at one draught above a pint of claret, and I do believe he is fuddled." He had been running in the garden, came in chilled with cold, snatched up a bottle at the sideboard, put it to his mouth, not considering the consequences of his draught. I ran with the utmost joy to Mrs. Hamilton, and without mincing the matter said, "*Be easy, he is drunk*"; for I was so happy to find it was not a *mortal disorder* that I had no management in what I said: and she answered with uplifted hands and eyes, "I thank God!" This circumstance, had it not relieved her from a greater distress, would

have been a great shock to her, but as it happened, we all rejoiced, and her wisdom about her boy will make her, I don't doubt, turn it to his advantage; he was carried to bed. They could not go home till this morning, and Mrs. Hamilton would not let her son appear: she told him she had a reason why she would not let the Dean and Mrs. Delany see him, and ordered him his breakfast in his room. He never was guilty of anything like it before, and I hope this will so *thoroughly mortify him* as to make him never guilty again.

I must go and dress, so adieu.

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

CURRENT FASHIONS

WHITEHALL, *November* 10, 1754.

. . . Yesterday after chapel the Duchess brought home Lady Coventry to feast me, and *a feast she was!* She is a fine figure and vastly handsome, notwithstanding a silly look sometimes about her mouth; she has a thousand airs, but with a sort of innocence that diverts one! Her dress was a black silk sack, made for a large hoop, which she wore without any, and it trailed a yard on the ground; she had on a cobweb laced handkerchief, a pink satin long cloke, lined with ermine, mixed with squirrel skins; on her head a French cap that just covered the top of her head, of blond, and stood in the form of a butterfly with its wings not quite extended, frilled sort of lappets crossed under her chin, and tied with pink and green ribbon—a head-dress that would have charmed a

shepherd. She has a thousand dimples and prettinesses in her cheeks, her eyes a little drooping at the corners, but fine for all that.

Mrs. Delany to Mrs. Dewes

THE WHOLE DUTY OF WOMAN

DELVILLE, *April* 14, 1759.

Monday, Tuesday spent at home, Wednesday morning painted and repairing Guido's Madonna and Sleeping Child, which by the sun's coming on it is much hurt, and shall then finish the copy of the Salvator Rosa I began in London: it belongs to the Bishop of Derry—it is for the chapel. . . . I have been delayed in my return backe to my letter by a little importunate robin, who would not let me pass by him in the portico walk till I had fed him with almonds; not satisfied with a plentiful repast for himself, he insisted on my giving him some for his wife, who is sitting on her nest expecting him; sometimes she grows impatient (perhaps a jealous fit) and *comes herself* to see what makes him stay so long; he knows her errand, and *crams her bill* before she can chide him for his delay. . . .

I am very glad Dr. Shuckleborough has got so plentiful a fortune, since he has a heart to do so much good with it. You are very wise, my dearest sister, in not *much* encouraging the humour of *drollery*. I think it is to the mind what drawing caracituros are to the painting genius, and *indulgence that way* spoils all the fine ideas of *real beauty*.

I believe Mrs. Hill has been very careful in the common way of the education of her daughters; they are in

ry good order, and civil. What I think L. M. may be wanting in is, what few people have attained at her age, who have not some real superiority of understanding, and a little experience of the manners of the world; nor *could she learn* from her mother that politeness of behaviour and address which is not only *just but bright.* She is pretty, excessively good-natured, and happy in her present situation; but I own I think my godson required a wife that knew more the punctilios of *good breeding*, as he is much wanting in them *himself*, and those things should not be wanting to men of rank and fortune; indeed I carry it *farther* and I think that nobody can do so much good in the world who is not well-bred as those that *are*; in truth it is only a modern phrase (according to my notion of that virtue) for *that* "charity" emphatically expressed by St. Paul. Yet refining is of little use, where the wife is only considered as a head servant in the family, and honoured with the head of the table, only that she may have all the troubles of carving as well as the care of supplying that table, so that her lord may not descend to any domestic drudgery. Our Maker created us "*helps meets*," which surely implies we are worthy of being their companions, their friends, *their advisers*, as well as *they ours*; without those privileges being our due, how could *obedience to their will be a punishment?* Our servants are not *punished* by being obedient to our will?

ELIZABETH CARTER (1717—1806)

was the daughter of a Kentish clergyman. She published a translation of Epictetus and other books, also a collection of poems written by herself. Although a very learned lady,

with a profound knowledge of Greek and eight other languages, she was also domesticated, and did not despise feminine occupations. She was an intimate friend of Dr. Johnson, and an important member of his circle.

To Catherine Talbot

RURAL SOCIETY

[1745.]

It is neither business nor amusement, but a scruple that sometimes takes me about writing nonsense, which has prevented me, my dear Miss Talbot, from sooner answering your letter. . . .

. . . Positively I do not know what to say to you, unless I tell you the sorrowful scrape I have drawn myself into, about love; bless me! What business had I to talk about things I know nothing about! As my ill stars would have it, I happened to express great pity for people under these dolorous circumstances, which drew me into a dispute with an antagonist so violent, that she distributes the words of fool, nonsense, wilful obstinacy, etc., etc. without reserve, amongst the whole tribe of lovers, and asserts that all compassion for them is misapplied and ridiculous. Not content with the first engagement, she constantly attacks me every time I see her; I am not yet quite a convert, but I believe out of mere indolence I shall at last give up the point, and leave all lovers to hang or drown themselves as they think fit.

A very imprudent match, which gave rise to all these debates, now gives place to the general conversation occasioned by the death of Sir John Hales, which you may have seen in the news, but probably not his character, which was most unaccountably singular: with an estate of ten or twelve thousand a year, he

has for a long time shut himself up in a great house, without so much as a servant. His children were not suffered to come near him, nor anybody else, for if ever he espied a human being near the house, he immediately ran and locked the door. To avoid his being seen or spoken to, the person who went to market for him found his orders in a note, in a basket in the stable, which when filled was returned to the same place; the only conversible animals he had about him were six hogs almost as old as their master, whom he fed with great care. The estate round his house, which is in a very pretty situation, lays quite untenanted and uncultivated; the horses and other cattle run quite wild, and in a state of nature all over the grounds. As he had lived, so he died quite alone, and was not discovered for some time after his death. At the change of affairs which soon took place, it is not to be told the consternation and bitter wailings of the owls and bats, who had for so many years had quiet possession of several of the best rooms, who after having reposed for several years on down beds, and velvet cushions, are now by the unmerciful heir turned adrift into the wide world to seek a cold lodging in a hollow tree.

What was the true spring of Sir John Hale's strange behaviour nobody can tell; he was said to be a man of sense and letters, and sometimes did very generous actions though in a strange way: in most parts of his character he was a perfect misanthrope. The estate descends to his grandson, a very pretty young gentleman, who it is believed will make a much better use of it than his predecessor. The originality of the character I thought would please you, and can only hope I have not made it too long. . . .

Elizabeth Carter to Catherine Talbot

"JOSEPH ANDREWS"

DEAL, *January* 1, 1745.

. . . I must thank you for the very agreeable entertainment I have met in reading Joseph Andrews, as it was your recommendation that first tempted me to enquire after it. It contains such a surprising variety of nature, wit, morality, and good sense as is scarcely to be met with in any one composition, and there is such a spirit of benevolence runs through the whole, as I think renders it peculiarly charming. The author has touched some particular instances of inhumanity which can only be hit in this kind of writing, and I do not remember to have seen observed anywhere else; these certainly cannot be represented in too detestable a light, as they are so severely felt by the persons they affect, and looked upon in too careless a manner by the rest of the world.

It must surely be a marvellous wrongheadedness and perplexity of understanding that can make any one consider this complete satire as a very immoral thing, and of the most dangerous tendency, and yet I have met with some people who treat it in the most outrageous manner.

Elizabeth Carter to Catherine Talbot

SWIFT

DEAL, *August* 28, 1766.

. . . I have never read Swift's last published letters, but am glad to find they will help to justify me in always having had a more favourable idea of his character than most people seemed to think he deserved. There

always appeared a rectitude and sincerity in him, much superior to the greater number of his contemporary geniuses. His wit, I cannot help thinking, was mere distemper, and for many instances of shocking impropriety and levity into which it hurried him he was perhaps as little accountable as for the delirium of a fever. Lord Corke, I think, somewhere speaks of his deplorable idiotcy as a judgement; surely it would have been more charitable to have considered it as the last stage of a long madness, which very frequently terminates in this conclusion.

Elizabeth Carter to Catherine Talbot

FRENCH FASHIONS

DEAL, *January* 1, 1750.

I am a little ashamed of the savage figure I make in your letter, and yet I know not well in this respect how to civilise myself. Our great people break through all the sacred authority of law, and seem to lose all sense of what is serious and decent in pursuit of French diversions, and are surrounded by French taylors, French valets, French dancing-masters and French cooks, while many of their unhappy countrymen are starving for want of employment. Our fine ladies disgrace "the human shape divine," and become helpless to themselves, and troublesome to all the world besides, with French hoops, and run into an indecent extravagance of dress, inconsistent with all rules of sober appearance and good economy. Little people always follow the example of their superiors, and we misses in the country have our heads equally turned with French fashions and French fooleries, which

make us break the law, and smuggle for the sake of getting French finery. In return for an hundred mischiefs, I do not recollect any one French invention that has been of any real benefit to this nation, and so till you have fairly convinced me that French fashions are for the good of my country, I shall not in any wise endeavour to rectify in myself the true spirit of the true original British crab.

Elizabeth Carter to Elizabeth Montagu

CURIOUS ENTERTAINMENTS

CLARGES STREET, *April* 18, 1780.

. . . Have you read an account in the papers of a very extraordinary *fête* that is soon to be exhibited at the Haymarket? I should be inclined to think it a sequel to the bottle conjuror. However, I heard last night of a lady who had taken places. Gladiators and Olympic games seem an odd kind of entertainment for ladies! But a still more shocking scene is advertised of the inside of Bedlam. It is a pity the inventor should not make an additional scene of the amusing spectacle of gibbets and wheels. The schools for declamation, I hear, are astonishingly crowded. I dread the torrent of impertinence with which they will overun the town Adieu, my dearest friend.

Elizabeth Carter to Catherine Talbot

A NEWGATE MOB

HILL STREET, *April* 9, 1769.

There is something so seducing, dear Miss Talbot, in writing to you by the penny post that I cannot

resist it. Not that I think you would be under any great solicitude about my getting home quietly last night in spite of the bad character of the roads; for I reached London in such good time, that if I had been robbed I might have sued the county. Perhaps you think it would have been worth while to have been robbed for the satisfaction of suing the county of Middlesex.

I set out on my city expedition this morning, where I met with an adventure which, I believe, you will think much more formidable than all the terrors of the Richmond road. I was to call on a person in my way, to accompany me to the South Sea house; and my nearest route was through Newgate. On going up Snow Hill I observed a pretty many people assembled, but did not much regard them, till, as I advanced, I found the croud thicken, and by the time I was got into the midst of them I heard the dreadful toll of St. Sepulchre's bell, and found I was attending an execution. As I do not very well understand the geography of Newgate, I thought if I could push through the postern I should find the coast clear on the other side, but to my utter dismay I found myself in a still greater mob than before, and very little able to make my way through them. Only think of me in the midst of such heat and suffocation, with the danger of having my arms broke, to say nothing of the company by which I was surrounded with near £100 in my pocket. In this exigency I applied to one of the crowd for assistance, and while he was hesitating, another man, who saw my difficulty, very good-naturedly said to me, "Come, madam, I will do my best to get you along." To this volunteer in my service, who was

tolerably creditable and clean considering the corps to which he belonged, I most cordially gave my hand; and without any bawling, or swearing, or bustle whatsoever, by mere gentle, persevering dexterity, he conducted me, I thank God, very safely through. You will imagine that I expressed a sufficient degree of gratitude to my conductor, which I did in the best language I could find—a circumstance which is never thrown away upon the common people, as you will acknowledge from the speech which he made me in return—"That all he had done was due to my person, and all he could do was due to my merit." This high strain of complimental oratory is really no embellishment to my story, but literally what my hero said. What a figure he would have made in the days of chivalry! In the midst of all my perplexities, I could not help remarking a singular circumstance in the discourse of the mob, in speaking of the unhappy criminal, that he was to *die* to-day; and I scarcely once heard the expression of his being to be *hanged*. To trace the cause of this delicacy is a good problem for the investigators of human nature.

As I thought this history of my city adventures might amuse Mrs. Talbot and you, I ought to prevent any kind concern you might feel from the apprehension of its having hurt me, which I do not think it has. I was immoderately heated at first getting out of the crowd, but it soon went off, and except being extremely tired I am about as well as usual to-night, though not equal to any more adventures.

Elizabeth Carter to Mrs. Vesey

WORDS OF PROPHECY

CLARGES STREET, *April* 17, 1772.

. . . I know nothing very remarkable going on at present, except preparations for a masquerade at the Pantheon. Perhaps you may think it one singular phenomenon in the present winter that the macaroni gentlemen wear artificial nosegays. Surely this species of animal is not an English character. Such a composition of monkey and demon, as at one half of the day appears to be studying all the tricks of the most trifling and contemptible foppery, and in the other raving and blaspheming at a gaming-table, must be an aggregate of all the follies and all the crimes that a worthless head and a profligate heart can collect from all parts of the globe. Next winter may perhaps furnish a companion to the picture, and exhibit the coterie ladies making riots at the play-houses, armed with oaken clubs, knocking down watchmen, and demolishing lamps—and fainting away at the sight of a spider or an earwig.

Adieu, my dear Mrs. Vesey. I am afraid you will think this rainy day disposes me to be censorious. But in rain or sunshine I am ever most affectionately,

E. C.

HESTER CHAPONE (1727–1801)

WAS the daughter of Thomas Mulso. She was a quick, intelligent girl, is said to have written a romance at ten, and to have studied French, Italian, and Latin at an early age. Her marriage in 1761 to Mr. Chapone, an attorney, was followed a few months later by widowhood. In 1772 she became

famous by her collection of essays called "Letters on the Improvement of the Mind." She was one of the few women who contributed to Dr. Johnson's *Rambler*. Richardson, the novelist, was her intimate friend and correspondent.

To Elizabeth Carter (?)

RICHARDSON AND FIELDING

February 11 [1751].

You enquire about Mr. Richardson and his new work,[1] and I won't take it as a compliment to me that you do so. I expect you to be sincerely pleased when I tell you that this charming work goes on very fast, and will, I hope, make its appearance ere long. Mr. R. indeed sometimes talks as if it should not be published during his life; but I am very sure he will change his mind as to that particular. He can't be insensible to fame. I believe nobody that could deserve it ever was. The only objection I have to his book is, that I apprehend it will occasion the kingdom's being overrun with old maids. It will give the woman the idea of perfection in a man which they never had before, and which none of the pretty fellows they are so often fond of could ever have furnished them with; and the difference will be so striking between this idea and the generality of men, that it must surely make them nice in their choice, the consequence of which niceness will be a single life to ninety-nine out of a hundred. I am at present in a painful uncertainty as to *the* catastrophe, and will not involve you in the same uneasiness by letting you into any part of the story. I do still think that it is, if possible, superior to "Clarissa." As I

[1] Sir Charles Gandison.

can say nothing higher in its praise I will not say anything more about it.

Mr. —— tells me that you are a friend to Fielding's "Amelia." I love the woman, but for the book—it must have merit, since Miss Carter and some few more good judges approve of it. Are not you angry with the author for giving his favourite character such a lord and master? and is it quite natural that she should be so perfectly happy and pleased with such a wretch? A fellow without principles, or understanding, with no other merit in the world but a natural good temper, and whose violent love for his wife could not keep him from injuring her in the most essential points, and that in circumstances that render him utterly inexcusable. Can you forgive his amour with that dreadful, shocking monster, Miss Mathews? Are we to look upon these crimes as the failings of human nature, as Fielding seems to do, who takes his notions of human nature from the most depraved and corrupted part of it, and seems to think no characters natural but such as are a disgrace to the human species? Don't you think Booth's sudden conversion a mere botch to save the author's credit as a moral writer? And is there not a tendency in all his works to soften the deformity of vice, by placing characters in an amiable light, that are destitute of every virtue except good nature? Was not you tired with the first two volumes? What think you of Mrs. Bennet and her story? Pray let me have your sentiments at large on this book, for I am uneasy to know how it comes to pass that you like it, and I do not. The last volume pleased me very well; and Doctor Harrison's character is admirable; the scene between Colonel James and his

lady, excellent; that in which Colonel James's challenge comes to the hands of Amelia is extremely affecting; the conversation between the Lord and Doctor Hainson, the doctor's letter, and the comments of the bucks upon it, I also admire very much. And now, I think, I have mentioned all that I can praise in the whole book; but it would take up more paper than I have left to point out one half of the passages that disgusted me.

I have begun to read Guthrie's translation of Cicero's Epistles to Atticus, and have not been able to forbear laughing, more than once, at the excessive sanity of your favourite Tully. You see I am in a way to deserve your correction, and pray let me have it. I feel that I have not so much reverence for great names as most people have, and as, I suppose, I ought to have. Don't spare me for this fault; however, I am not so audacious as to deliver these heterodox opinions to everybody, though I do to you. This may seem strange, as I am sure there is nobody whose judgement I revere more than yours, but I purposely lay myself open to your reproofs, because I know I shall benefit by them.

Hester Chapone to Elizabeth Carter

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

CANTERBURY, *Wednesday* [1751].

A thousand thanks to my dear Miss Carter for the happiness I enjoyed in a visit which will ever give me pleasure in reflection, though at present that pleasure is mixed with a painful regret. A thousand thanks to her for allowing me to hope for a share in one of the

best of human hearts, in a friendship which would do honour to the first of women, even to her Miss F——; a friendship which I can never deserve, except by the high value at which I prize it, and the sincere love and veneration with which I return it.

I owe many thanks also to your very agreeable sister, who seems to me to have not only "refined sense," but "all sense" and an excellent genius for human conveniences, though she is a wicked wit, and laughs at me, and despises me in her heart; yet I can't for my life be angry with her for it, but patiently consider that it might have pleased God to have made me a wit. I saw her, too, exult over me in her housewifely capacity; when I folded up the ginger-bread nuts so awkwardly, I saw it was nuts to her; but I forgive her, and hope she will repent before she dies of all her uncharitable insults on a poor gentlewoman, that never was guilty of more than four poor odes, and yet is as careless, as awkward, and as untidy as if she had made as many heroic poems as the great and majestic Blackmore!

You were pleased to be anxious about my journey, therefore I must give you some account of it. My company was much better than I hoped, and not a man midwife amongst them. Imprimis, there was Mrs. ——, sister to Mr. ——, a very sensible, well-bred old gentlewoman, who knew my aunt, and with whom I scraped acquaintance. Item, a Mrs. —— I think, was her name, who, I fancy, was one of your party at commerce, seeing she was fat and vociferous, and looked uncommonly joyous. With her a civil gentleman-like sort of a sail-maker (for that, he told me, was his trade) from Ratcliffe Cross, very fat and large, with

a leg bigger than my waist. Item, a maid servant, going to Lady ——'s, of a middle size. Item, a very fat gentlewoman, taken up very hot at Sandwich, and set down again at Wingham, who, in that three miles, with the assistance of the sail-maker, had very near finished my journey through this mortal life; but her removal restored me to the faculty of breathing, and I got to Canterbury without any casualty, save breaking my lavender-water bottle in my pocket, and cutting my fingers. N.B.—I had like to have been overturned upon Sandown, but thought of the Stoic philosophy and did not squeak. At Wingham we refreshed nature, and repaired our clay tenements with some filthy dried tongue and bread-and-butter, and some well-mixed mountain wine, by which means, as I told you before, I was brought alive to Canterbury.

Hester Chapone to Elizabeth Carter

THE INVITATION

CANTERBURY, *Monday*, [1751].

It might perhaps be more modest in me, dear Miss Carter, to decline your very obliging and most agreeable invitation, but truly I am a very weak creature, and unable to resist so strong a temptation. My aunt has been good-natured enough to give me her excuse and permission to leave her for a few days; and next Friday, if convenient to you, I propose stuffing myself into that same lumbering conveyance you speak of, and embracing my dear Miss Carter between five and six in the evening. How shall I regale upon your one dish with "the feast of reason and the flow of soul!"

Remember that you have promised me *one* dish; if I see it even *garnished* I shall take it as a rebuke for my want of modesty in taking you at your first word, and without any more ceremony making myself a part of your family. I believe indeed it is not quite right, but I can't help it, and you will see in this, as well as in a hundred other instances when we are much together, how great an enemy I am to forms, and how dangerous it is to tempt me to anything I have an inclination for. I have thought of nothing but being with you since I read your letter. What a sweet opportunity shall we have of knowing more of each other's minds in three days than we should have done in three years in the common way of visiting! You see I take it for granted that our satisfaction is to be mutual. I believe every civil thing you say to me, and every expression of friendship from you to be perfectly sincere, without the least allowance for politeness, because I wish to believe, and because I think my dear Miss Carter is above a compliance with the fashions of the world that must cost her the smallest deviation from truth.

HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI (Mrs. Thrale) **(1741–1821)**

was the daughter of Mr. Salisbury of Carnarvonshire, and the wife of Henry Thrale, a wealthy brewer. About 1765 she first met Doctor Johnson, who became devotedly attached to her, and was frequently at Streatham. After her husband's death, in 1781, Mrs. Thrale married Signor Piozzi, a professional musician. This marriage did not please Dr. Johnson, and caused a break in his friendship.

Mrs. Piozzi published a collection of "Letters to and from Dr. Johnson," and forestalled Boswell with her Johnsonian anecdotes. At the mature age of eighty she died of the consequences of a broken leg.

To Dr. Johnson

FEMININE BLANDISHMENTS

May 23, 1773.

I write again, dear Sir, though the time of meeting is so near, and should be sorry to think my flattery did *not* please you—if flattery it is, but I call it honest praise. Other people make more bustle about your merits every day, and you bear them patiently enough: pray let my incense-pot have a place among the rest. Mr. Thrale swears he found you one morning last week in the midst of a heap of men, who, he says, carried each a brass-headed cane in his hand, and that they were all flattering away *à qui mieux mieux*. Surely there was not in the whole company one to be found who uttered expressions of esteem with more sincerity than myself; none of them think you as much exalted over the common herd of mortals as I think you, and none of them can praise you from a purer motive. It is my consolation to have a wise friend, my delight to declare that I know him such; nor is this a time when I can afford to lose either delight or consolation. Should a man protest, indeed, that a fever-fit would be more welcome to him than the detecting me in an error, I might reasonably enough begin to be alarmed and fear that he was flattering me grossly; but I never did vent my partiality in any terms half as violent as those; and yet, dear Mr. Johnson, who gravely says

HESTER LYNCH THRALE

(MRS. PIOZZI)

From an engraving by E. Finden, after a picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.

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that of old Celsus, has the courage to reprove me for flattering.

Well! I was told this morning, that G—— O—— speaks very highly of our master up and down; as I believe he hates us all, *he* cannot be accused of playing the sycophant; the extorted praise of an enemy, however, though in many respects grateful enough, has somewhat offensive in it too, like the coarse perfume obtained by chymical operations on a poisonous substance, while the natural emanation of a friend's good-will resembles the reviving scent of vegetable fragrance. I am glad, at all events, that he is forced to speak respectfully, and even my poor mother enjoys the thought.

What a loss am I about to endure in her death! Let me hope that your kindness may prompt you to soothe the pain, and as far as it is possible to fill up the chasm; though you shall permit me to add my firm persuasion that all endeavours will be insufficient. If the Emperor of China should take from one of his slaves the liberty of ever more tasting water, rice, or tea, he would be very ill compensated, poor soul! by the free use of every dainty his master's magnificent table could afford him. No companion, however wise, no friend, however useful, can be to me what my mother has been: her image will long pursue my fancy; her voice for ever hang in my ears: may her precepts but sink into my heart! When fortune is taken away, chance or diligence may repair it; fame likewise has been found not wholly irrecoverable. *My* loss alone can neither be restored nor supplied in this world; I will try and turn my best thoughts upon another. Meanwhile, a million of things press upon me *here*, and

force me to defend a post scarcely tenable. Give me your company, your counsel, and your prayers, for I am ever,

Your truly faithful servant,
H. L. THRALE.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson

HUMAN FINGER-POSTS

August 9, 1775.

You ask, dear Sir, if I keep your letters—to be sure I do; for though I would not serve you as you said you would serve Lady —— were you married to her—live a hundred miles off, and make her write once a week (was not it ?) because her conversation and manners were coarse, but her letters elegant; yet I have always found the best supplement for talk was writing, and yours particularly so. My only reason to suppose that we should dislike looking over the correspondence twelve or twenty years hence, was because the sight of it would *not* revive the memory of cheerful times at all. God forbid that I should be less happy than now, when I am perpetually bringing or losing babies, both very dreadful operations to me, and which tear mind and body both in pieces very cruelly. Sophy is at this very instant beginning to droop, or I dream so; and how is it likely one should ever have comfort in revising the annals of vexation ?

You say, too, that I shall not grow wiser in twelve years, which is a bad account of futurity; but if I grow happier I shall grow wiser, for, being less chained down to surrounding circumstances, what power of thinking

my mind naturally possesses will have fair play at least. The mother or mistress of a large family is in the case of a tethered nag, always treading and subsisting on the same spot; she hears and repeats the same unregarded precepts; frets over that which no fretting can diminish; and hopes on, in very spite of experience, for what death does not ever suffer her to enjoy. With regard to mental improvement, Perkins[1] might as well expect to grow rich by repeating the Multiplication Table, as I to grow wise by holding Watt's "Art of Reading" before my eyes. A finger-post, though it directs others on the road, cannot advance itself; was it once cut into coach wheels, who knows how far it might travel?

When Ferguson made himself an astronomer, the other lads of the village were loading corn and pitching hay,—though with the same degree of leisure they might perhaps have attained the same degree of excellence; but they were *doing* while he was *thinking*, you see, and when leisure is obtained, incidents, however trifling, may be used to advantage; besides that, 'tis better, as Shakespeare says,

> To be eaten up with a rust
> Than scoured to nothing with perpetual motion.

So if ever I get quiet I shall get happy; and if I get happy I shall have a chance to get wise. Why, wisdom itself stands still, says Mr. Johnson, and then how will you advance? It will be an advancement to me to trace that very argument, and examine whether it has advanced or no. Was not it your friend M——l who first said that next to winning at cards the greatest

[1] Perkins was the manager of her husband's brewery.

happiness was losing at cards? I should feel the second degree of delight in assuring myself that there was no wisdom to be obtained. Baker's "Reflections on Learning" was always a favourite book with me, and he says you have all been trotting in a circle these two or three thousand years—but let us join the team at least, and not stand gaping while others trot. The tethered horse we talked of just now would beg to work in our mill if he could speak; and an old captain of a ship told me, that when he set the marine society boys to run round the hoop for a pudding in fine weather, to divert the officers, those who were hardest lashed seldom lamented; but all cried, ready to break their hearts, who were left out of the game. Here is enough of this, I believe.

We are all pleased that you intend to come home in a chaise. Who should you save sixteen shillings for? and how much richer would your heirs be for those sixteen shillings? Calculation is perpetually opposed to the spendthrift; but if misers would learn to count, they would be misers no longer: for how many years must a man live to save out of a small income one hundred pounds, even if he adopted every possible method? besides the ill-will of the world, which pursues avarice more closely, and watches it more narrowly than any other vice.

I have indeed often wondered that the bulk of mankind should look on a person who gains money unjustly with less detestation than they survey the petty savings of him who lives penuriously;—for the first is in everybody's way, and if he excited everybody's hatred, who need wonder? while a hoarder injures no one but himself—yet even his heirs abhor him.

There is, however, little call, I believe to make sermons, against covetousness for the use of dear Mr. Johnson, or of his

Faithful and obedient servant,
H. L. THRALE.

Sophy is very sick, and we all wish you would come home.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson

GOSSIP FROM BRIGHTHELMSTONE

BRIGHTHELMSTONE, *November* 11, 1778.

You are very kind, dear Sir, in wishing us at home, and we are very much obliged to you for all your good wishes, and all your good help towards our happiness; notwithstanding the worthy parallel you draw between yourself and *honest Joseph*. That letter in "Clarissa" was always a favourite of mine—'tis nature, 'tis truth, and, what I delight in still more, 'tis general nature, not particular manners, that Richardson represents;—Honest Joseph, and Pamela's old father and mother, are translatable, not like Fielding's fat landladies, who all speak the Wiltshire dialect—*arrow* man, or *arrow* woman instead of *e'er a man* and *e'er a woman*. Such minute attentions to things scarce worth attending to are, at best, excellencies of a meaner kind, and most worthy the partiality of him who collects Dutch paintings in preference to the Italian school. But I dare not add another word on this subject, though you are a Richardsonian yourself.

With regard to coming home *en lo que toca al rebusnar*, as Sancho says; I have leave to be explicit. Burney shall bring you on the 26th; so now we may talk about Richardson and Fielding if we will, or of anything

else *but* coming home; for did not wise Ulysses go to sleep as soon as he was within sight of his own country which he had hunted no less than ten years? And does not the Irishman, when at half the earth's diameter from his mistress, cry out, *Ah! my dear Sheelah o'Sheelah, were I once within forty miles of those pretty eyes, I would never desire to be nearer them in all my life?* So why should not I, after fretting to come home ever since we came hither, though I never said so—why should not I, now the day is fixed—forget and think no more on't? That, says Mr. Johnson, is a bad place of which the best good thing is bad weather—yet that is true of Brighthelmstone this Autumn; and last week we had some storms that were very sublime. To see the ship how she fought, as the clown says, and the sea how he flap-dragoned it, was a fine sight to us safely posted observers. *Suave mari magno*, etc.; and what are Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulines compared to the winds and the waves? There are horn lanthorns (you remember) and paper lanthorns, but what are they when opposed to the sun and the moon? Winter is coming on apace, that's certain; and it will be three months at least that we shall live without the sight of either leaf or blossom; we will try good fires and good humour, and make ourselves all the amend we can. *I* have lost more than Spring and Summer—I have lost what made my happiness in all seasons of the year; but the black dog shall not make prey of both my master[1] and myself.—Much is gone—

> What then remains, but well what's left to use?
> And keep good humour still, whate'er we lose.

[1] Mr. Thrale.

The speech in this place is, how we escape the melancholy months that shew a decaying year, because there are no leaves to fall, forsooth. But don't you know April from November without trees? Methinks, wanting woods to tell the seasons is as bad as wanting a weathercock to know which way the wind blows. How is Mr. ——, however, who talks all about taste, and classics, and country customs, and rural sports, with rapture, which he perhaps fancies unaffected—was riding by our chaise on the Downs yesterday, and said, because the sun shone, that one could not perceive it was Autumn, "for," says he, "there is not one tree in sight to shew us the fall of the leaf; and hark! how that sweet bird sings," continued he, "just like the first week in May." "No, no," replied I, "that's nothing but a poor robin-redbreast, whose chill, wintry note tells the season too plainly, without assistance from the vegetable kingdom." "Why, you amaze me," quoth our friend, "I had no notion of *that*." Yes, Mrs. —— says, this man is a natural convener, and Mrs. —— is an honourable lady.

My master is a good man, and a generous, he has made me some valuable presents here; and he swims now, and forgets the black dog.

Mr. Murphy is a man whose esteem every one must be proud of; I wrote to him about Evelina two days ago.

Mr. Scrafe is the comfort of our lives here. Driven from business by ill-health, he concentrates his powers now to serve private friends. For true vigour of mind, for invariable attachment to those he has long loved, for penetration to find the right way, and spirit to pursue it, I have seen none exceed him. How much more valuable is such a character than that of a polite scholar,

your *belles lettres* man, who would never have known that bees made honey had not Virgil written his Georgicks?

Your visiting-ticket has been left very completely in Wales. Was it the fashion to leave cards in Prior's time? I thought not—yet he seems to allude to the custom when he says, People

> Should in life's visit leave their name;
> And in the writing take great care
> That all was full, and round, and fair.

The Welsh, I once told you, would never be ungrateful—*à propos*, I am not myself half grateful enough to Mr. Fitzmaurice, for his unsought and undeserved civilities towards me, concerning my old house and pictures in Wales.—Though you despise them, you do not, I am sure, despise me for desiring that he should be pleased. So now, *do pray* help to discharge some of my debts of politeness, and write him a pretty letter on his son's birth—and get it finished, signed, sealed, and delivered at furthest—before the boy *comes of age if you can*.

My friend —— is dying, sure enough; but dear Mrs. —— need be in no concern for *his* future state, on the same score she trembled for her husband's: do you remember how prettily she congratulated me that my mother would go to Heaven, "while poor ——," says she, "God knows what will become of *him! for if it were not for the Mayoril he* would never have known Christmas from Whitsuntide." Ah, dear Sir, and don't you think I prize you more, now I have lost my last surviving parent?—Such a parent!—Yes, yes—one may have twenty children, but *amor descendit*, it is by one's father and mother alone that one is loved. I, poor solitary wretch! have no regard now from

any one, except what I can purchase by good behaviour, or flattery, or incessant fatigue of attention, and be worked at besides, sick or well, with intolerable diligence, or else I lose even you, whom I daily esteem more, as I see the virtue of some so diluted by folly, and the understanding of others so tainted by vice. I am now far from happy, yet I dress and dance, and do my best to shew others how merry I am.—It is the Winter robin that twitters though, not the Summer throstle that sings.

I long to come home, but wherever I am, depend on my being ever,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

H. L. THRALE.

Mr. Scrafe gives us fine fruit; I wished you my pear yesterday; but then what would *one pear* have done for you?

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson

AN EVENING AT MRS. MONTAGU'S

BATH, *Friday April* 28, 1780.

I had a very kind letter from you yesterday, dear Sir, with a most circumstantial date. You took trouble with my circulating letter, Mr. Evans writes me word, and I thank you sincerely for so doing: one might do mischief else, not being on the spot.

Yesterday's evening was passed at Mrs. Montagu's: there was Mr. Melmoth; I do not like him *though*, nor he me; it was expected we should have pleased each other; he is, however, just Tory enough to hate the Bishop of Peterborough for Whigism and Whig enough to abhor you for Toryism.

Mrs. Montagu flattered him finely; so he had a good afternoon on't. This evening we spend at a concert. Poor Queeney's [1] sore eyes have just released her; she had a long confinement and could neither read nor write, so my master treated her very good-naturedly with the visits of a young woman in this town, a tailor's daughter who professes music, and teaches so as to give six lessons a day to ladies, at five-and-threepence a lesson. Miss Burney says she is a great performer; and I respect the wench for getting her living so prettily; she is very modest and pretty-mannered, and not seventeen years old.

You live in a fine world indeed; if I did not write regularly you would half forget me, and that would be very wrong, for I *felt* my regard for you in my *face* last night when the criticisms were going on.

This morning it was all connoisseurship; we went to see some pictures painted by a gentleman-artist, Mr. Taylor, of this place; my master makes one everywhere, and has got a good dawdling companion to ride with him now. . . . He [2] looks well enough, but I have no notion of health for a man whose mouth cannot be sewed up. Burney and I and Queeny tease him every meal he eats, and Mrs. Montagu is quite serious with him; but what can one do? He will eat, I think; and if he does eat I know he will not live; it makes me very unhappy, but I must bear it. Let me always have your friendship. I am, most sincerely,

Dear Sir, your faithful servant.

H. L. T.

[1] Mrs. Thrale's daughter.

[2] Mr. Thrale, who ultimately sacrificed his life by his devotion to good-living.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson

CONFESSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

November 2, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—There was no need to be enraged, because I thought you might easily forget a transaction not at all pleasing to remember; nor no need that I should be enraged if you had indeed forgotten it; but you was always suspicious in matters of memory. Cummins don't forget it, however, as I can tell you more at large. My health is growing very bad to be sure. I will starve still more rigidly for a while, and watch myself carefully; but more than six months will I not bestow upon that subject; you shall not have in me a valetudinary correspondent, who is always writing such letters, that to read the labels tyed on bottles by an apothecary's boy would be more eligible and amusing; nor will I live like Flavia in Law's "Serious Call," who spends half her time and money on herself, with sleeping-draughts and waking-draughts and cordials and broths. My desire is always to determine against my own gratification, so far as shall be possible for my body to co-operate with my mind; and you will not suspect me of wearing blisters, and living wholly upon vegetables for sport. If that will do, the disorder may be removed; but if health is gone, and gone for ever, we will act as Zachary Pearce the famous Bishop of Rochester did, when he lost the wife he loved so—call for one glass to the health of her who is departed, never more to return—and so go quietly back to the usual duties of life, and forbear to mention her again from that time till the last day of it. Susan is exceedingly honoured, *I* think, by Miss Seward's enquiries,

and I would have Susan think so too; the humbler one's heart is, the more one's pride is gratified, if one may use so apparently Irish an expression, but the meaning of it does not lie deep. They who are too proud to care whether they please or no, lose much delight themselves, and give none to their neighbours. Mrs. Porter is in a bad way, and that makes you melancholy; the visits to Stowhill will this year be more frequent than ever. I am glad Watts's "Improvement of the Mind" is a favourite book among the Lichfield ladies; it is so pious, so wise, so easy a book to read for any person, and so useful, nay necessary, are its precepts to us all, that I never cease recommending it to our young ones. 'Tis *à la porte de chacun* so, yet never vulgar; but Law beats him for wit; and the names are very happy in Watts somehow. I fancy there was no comparison between the scholastic learning of the two writers; but there is prodigious knowledge of the human heart, and perfect acquaintance with common life, in the "Serious Call." You used to say you would not trust me with that author upstairs on the dressing-room shelf, yet I now half wish I had never followed any precepts but his. Our lasses, indeed, might possibly object to the education given her daughters by Law's Eusebia.

That the ball did so little towards diverting you I do not wonder: what can a ball do towards diverting any one who has not other hopes and other designs than barely to see people dance, or even to dance himself? They who are entertained *at* the ball are never much amused *by* the ball I believe, yet I love the dance on Queeny's birthday and yours, where none but very honest and very praiseworthy passions—if

passions they can be called—heighten the mirth and gaiety. It has been thought by many wise folks that we fritter our pleasures all away by refinement, and when one reads Goldsmith's works, either verse or prose, one fancies that in corrupt life there is more enjoyment—yet *we* should find little solace from ale-house merriment or cottage carousals, what even *the best wrestler on the green* might do, I suppose: mere brandy and brown-sugar *liqueurs*, like that which Foote presented the Cherokee kings with, and won their hearts from our fine ladies who treated them with spunge biscuits and Frontiniac. I am glad Queeny and you are to resolve so stoutly, and labour so violently; such a union may make her wiser and you happier, and can give me nothing but delight.

We read a good deal here in your absence, that is, *I* do: it is better we sate all together than in separate rooms; better that I read than not; and better that I should never read what is not fit for the young ladies to hear; besides, I am sure they *must* hear that which I read *out* to them, and so one saves the trouble of commanding what one knows will never be obeyed.—I can find no other way as well.

Come home, however, for 'tis dull living without you. Sir Philip and Mr. Selwin[1] call very often, and are exceedingly kind. I see them always with gratitude and pleasure; but as the first has left us now for a month, come home therefore. You are not happy away, and I fear I shall never be happy again in this world between one thing and another. My health,

[1] Apparently Sir Philip Francis, who had just returned from India with a fortune acquired chiefly by his skill at whist; and George Selwyn the wit.

flesh, and complexion are quite lost, and I shall have a red face if I live, and that will be mighty detestable —a humpback would be less offensive, vastly.

This is the time for fading; the year is fading round us, and every day shuts in more dismally than the last did. I never passed so melancholy a summer, though I have passed some that were more painful —privation indeed, supposed to be worse than pain.

Instead of trying the Sortes Virgilianæ for our absent friends, we agreed after dinner to-day to ask little Harriet what they were doing now who used to be our common guests at Streatham. Dr. Johnson (says she) is very rich and wise, Sir Philip is drowned in the water, and Mr. Piozzi is very sick and lame, poor man! What a curious way of deciding! all in her little soft voice. Was not there a custom among the ancients in some country—'tis mentioned in Herodotus, if I remember right—that they took that method of enquiring into futurity from the mouths of infants under three years old? but I will not swear to the book I have read it in. The Scriptural expression, however, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings*, etc., is likely enough to allude to it, if it were once a general practice. In Ireland, where the peasants are mad after play, particularly backgammon, Mr. Murphy says they will even, when deprived of the necessaries for continuing so favourite a game, cut the turf in a clean spot of greensward, and make it into tables for that amusement, setting a little boy behind the hedge to call their throws for them, and supply with his unconscious decisions the place of box and dice.

Adieu, dear Sir, and be as cheerful as you can this gloomy season. I see nobody happy hereabouts but

the Burneys; they love each other with uncommon warmth of family affection, and are beloved by the world as much as if their fondness were less concentrated. The Captain has got a fifty-gun ship now, and we are all *so* rejoiced. Once more farewel, and do not forget Streatham nor its inhabitants, who are all much yours—and most so of all,

Your faithful Servant,
H. L. THRALE.

We never name Mr. Newton of Lichfield; I hope neither he nor his fine china begin to break yet—of other friends there the accounts get very bad, to be sure.

ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD (1743–1825)

THE daughter of the Rev. John Aikin, D.D., a dissenting minister, she became the wife of the Rev. Rochemont Barbauld, also a dissenting minister. The year preceding her marriage she published some poems which quickly ran through four editions. Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld started a boarding-school for boys at Palgrave, Suffolk, which soon became a great success. While in Suffolk Mrs. Barbauld published "Early Lessons for Children." She also edited a collection of British novelists, but her best-known work at the present day are her "Hymns in Prose for Children," which have been many times reprinted.

To her brother, Dr. Aikin

THE NEW BABY

PALGRAVE, *September* 9, 1775.

I give you joy with all my heart, my dear brother, on the little hero's appearance in the world, and hope

he will live to be as famous a man as any of his namesakes. I shall look upon you now as a very respectable man, as being entitled to all the honours and privileges of a father of three children. I would advise you to make one a hero, as you have determined; another a scholar; and for the third—send him to us, and we will bring him up for a Norfolk farmer, which I suspect to be the best business of the three. I have not forgot Arthur, and send you herewith a story for his edification; but I must desire you to go on with it. When you have brought the Shepherd Hidallan a sheet further in his adventures, send him back to me, and I will take up the pen; it will be a very sociable way of writing, and I doubt not but it will produce something new and clever. The great thing to be avoided in these things is the having any plan in your head: nothing cramps your fancy so much; and I protest to you I am entirely clear from that inconvenience.

Pray can you tell me anything about Crashaw? I have read some verses of his, prefixed to Cornaro's treatise, so exceedingly pretty that I am persuaded he must have written more, and should be glad to see them: I would transcribe the verses, but I think you have Cornaro in your library. . . .

. . . Now I am upon poetical subjects, I must tell you that a young clergyman in this neighbourhood is writing a play, which he does us the honour to submit to our criticism. The subject is, the resistance of the Chilese to the Spaniards, by which they recovered their independence. I am afraid I gave him very wicked advice; for I recommended it to him to reconvert his Indian from Christianity to Heathenism and to make his Chiefs a little more quarrelsome.

I believe the Devotional Pieces have met with the fate of poor Jonah, and been swallowed up by some whale—perhaps out of pity and compassion, to save them in his jaws from the more terrible teeth of the critics. St. Anthony, I think, preached to the fishes: perhaps I may have the same honour. I should as soon inspire a porpoise with devotion as a turtle-eater.

You must know I find one inconvenience in franks; one never knows when to have done. In a common letter you fill your sheet, and there's an end; but with a frank you may write on and on for ever: I have tired two pens already. But I will write no more to you: I will write to poor Patty, who wants amusement, so farewell! Go and study your Greek; and do not interrupt us.

And how do you do, my dear Patty? Let me take a peep at this boy. Asleep, is he? Never mind; draw the cradle-curtains softly and let me have a look. Upon my word, a noble lad! Dark eyes, like his mother, and a pair of cheeks! You may keep him a few months yet before you pack him up in the hamper; and then I desire you will send him with all speed; for you know he is to be mine. . . .

May every blessing attend you and yours, and all the dear society at Warrington.

A. L. Barbauld to Mrs. Eliza Kenrick

FOREIGN CUSTOMS

GENEVA, *October* 21, 1785.

. . . Will you hear how they pass the Sunday at Geneva? They have service at seven in the morning,

at nine, and at two; after that they assemble in parties for conversation, cards, and dancing, and finish the day at the theatre. Did not you think they had been stricter at Geneva than to have plays on the Sunday, especially as it is but two or three years since they were allowed at all? The service at their churches is seldom much more than an hour, and I believe few people go more than once a day. As soon as the text is named, the minister puts on his hat, in which he is followed by all the congregation, except those whose hats and heads have never any connection; for you well know that to put his hat upon his head is the last use a well-dressed Frenchman would think of putting it to. At proper periods of the discourse the minister stops short, and turns his back to you, in order to blow his nose, which is a signal for all the congregation to do the same; and a glorious concert it is, for the weather is already severe, and people have got colds. I am told, too, that he takes this time to refresh his memory by peeping at his sermon, which lies behind him in the pulpit.

Nobody ought to be too old to improve; I should be sorry if I was; and I flatter myself I have already improved considerably by my travels. First, I can swallow gruel soup, egg soup, and all manner of soups, without making faces much. Secondly, I can pretty well live without tea; they give it, however, at Geneva. Thirdly, I am less and less shocked, and hope in time I shall be quite easy, at seeing gentlemen, perhaps perfect strangers, enter my room without ceremony when I am in my bed-gown. I would not have you think, however, I am in danger of losing my modesty; for if I am no longer affected at some things, I have learned

to blush at others; and I will tell you, as a friend, that I believe there is but one indecency in France, which is, for a man and his wife to have the same sleeping-room. "Est-ce vôtre chambre, madame, ou celle de Monsieur vôtre époux?" said a lady to me the other day. I protest I felt quite out of countenance to think we had but one. . . .

A. L. Barbauld to her brother, Dr. Aikin

FOR AND AGAINST

MARSEILLES, *December* 1785.

Health to you all—poor mortals as you are, crowding round your coal fires, shivering in your nicely closed apartments, and listening with shivering hearts to the wind and snow which beats dark December! The months here have indeed the same names, but far different are their aspects; for here I am sitting without a fire, the windows open, and breathing an air as perfectly soft and balmy as in our warmest days of May yet the sun does not shine. On the day we arrived here, the 5th of December, it did, and with as much splendour and warmth, and the sky was as clear and of as bright a blue as in our finest summer days. The fields are full of lavender, thyme, mint, rosemary, etc.; the young corn is above half a foot high: they have not much indeed in this neighbourhood, but from Orange to Lisle we saw a good deal. The trees which are not evergreens have mostly lost their leaves; but one sees everywhere the pale verdure of the olives mixed with here and there a grove, or perhaps a single tree of cypress, shooting up its graceful spire of a deeper

and more lively green far above the heads of its humbler but more profitable neighbours. The markets abound with fresh and dried grapes, pomegranates, oranges with the green leaves, apples, pears, dried figs, and almonds. They reap the corn here the latter end of May or the beginning of June. The gathering of the olives is not yet finished: it yields to this country its richest harvest. There are likewise a vast number of mulberry trees, and the road in many places is bordered with them; but they are perfectly naked at present. Marseilles is, however, not without bad weather. The *vent de bise*, they say, is penetrating; and for this last fortnight they have had prodigious rains, with the interruption of only a few days; so that the streets are very dirty and the roads broken up. But they say this is very extraordinary, and that if they pass two days without seeing a bright sun they think Nature is dealing very hardly with them. I will not, however, boast too much over you from these advantages; for I am ready to confess the account may be balanced by many inconveniences, little and great, which attend this favoured country. And thus I state my account:

ADVANTAGES OF TRAVELLING	PER CONTRA
A July sun and a southern breeze.	Flies, fleas, and all Pharaoh's plague of vermin.
Figs, almonds, etc. etc.	No tea, and the very name of a tea-kettle unknown.
Sweet scents in the fields.	Bad scents within doors.
Grapes and raisins.	No plum-pudding.
Coffee as cheap as milk.	Milk as dear as coffee.
Wine a demi-sous the bottle.	Bread three sous the half-penny roll.

Provençal songs and laughter.	Provençal roughness and scolding.
Soup, salad and oil.	No beef, no butter.
Arcs of triumph, fine churches, stately palaces.	Dirty inns, heavy roads, uneasy carriages.
A pleasant and varied country.	But many, many a league from those we love.

A. L. Barbauld to Mrs. Carr

A TRAGEDY

PIT COT, near BRIDGEND, *July* 18, 1797.

. . . We flattered ourselves with seeing some of the beauties of South Wales in coming hither, but we were completely disappointed by the state of the weather. This country is bleak and bare, with fine views of the sea, and a bold, rocky coast, with a beach of fine hard sand. We have been much pleased with watching the coming in of the tide among the rocks, against which it dashes, forming columns of spray twenty and thirty feet high, accompanied with rainbows and with a roar like distant cannon. There are fine caverns and recesses among the rocks; one particularly which we took the opportunity of visiting yesterday, as it can only be entered at the ebb of the spring tides. It is very spacious, beautifully arched, and composed of granite rocks finely veined with alabaster, which the imagination may easily form into a resemblance of a female figure, and is of course the Nereid of the grotto. We wished to have stayed longer; but our friend hurried us away, lest the tide should rush in, which it is supposed to do from subterraneous caverns,

as it fills before the tide covers the sand of the adjacent beach. I was particularly affected by the fate of two lovers, a young lady and gentleman from Clifton, whose friends were here for the sake of sea-bathing. They stole out early one morning by themselves, and strolled along the beach till they came to this grotto, which, being then empty, they entered. They admired the strata of rock leaning in different directions: they admired the encrustation which covers part of the sides, exactly resembling honeycomb, various shells imbedded in the rock, the sea-anemone spreading its purple fringe—an animal flower clinging to the rocks. They admired the first efforts of vegetation in the purple and green tints occasioned by the lichens and other mosses creeping over the bare stone. They admired these together; they loved each other the more for having the same tastes, and they taught the echoes of the cavern to repeat the vows which they made of eternal constancy. In the meantime the tide was coming in: of this they were aware, as they now and then glanced their eye on the waves, which they saw advancing at a distance; but not knowing the peculiar nature of the cavern, they thought themselves safe; when on a sudden, as they were in the farthest part of it, the waters rushed in from fissures in the rock with terrible roaring. They climbed from ledge to ledge of the rocks—but in vain: the water rose impetuously, and at length filled the whole grotto. Their bodies were found the next day, when the tide was out, reclining on a shelf of rock—he in the tender attitude of supporting her, in the very highest accessible part, and leaning his own head in her lap—so that he must have died first. Poor lovers! If, however, you

should be too much grieved for them, you may impute the whole, if you please, to a waking dream which I had in the grotto.

CATHERINE CLIVE (1711–1785)

THE daughter of William Raftor, a Kilkenny lawyer. She made her *début* at Drury Lane in 1728 as a comedy actress, and continued to play at that theatre till she quitted the stage in 1769. David Garrick was for many years manager of old Drury during her career. She was a great favourite of Dr. Johnson, who especially admired her acting.

To David Garrick[1]

AN APPRECIATION

TWICKENHAM, *June* 23, 1776.

DEAR SIR,—Is it really true that you have put an end to the glory of Drury Lane Theatre? *If it is so*, let me congratulate my dear Mr. and Mrs. Garrick on their approaching happiness. I *know* what it will be: you cannot yet have an idea of it; *but* if you should still be so wicked not to be satisfied with that *unbounded*, uncommon degree of fame you have received as an actor, and which no other actor ever did receive—nor no other actor ever *can* receive;—I say, if you should still long to be dipping your fingers in their theatrical pudding (now without plums), you will be no Garrick for the Pivy. In the height of public admiration for you, when you were never mentioned with any other appellation but Mr. Garrick, the charming man, the fine fellow, the delightful creature, both by men and ladies; when they were admiring everything

[1] The following letters are reprinted by kind permission of Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, from his Life of Kitty Clive.

you did and everything you scribbled, at this very time *the Pivy* was a living witness that they did not know, nor could they be sensible of, half your perfections. I have seen you with your magical hammer in your hand, endeavouring to beat your ideas into the heads of creatures who had none of their own. I have seen you with lamb-like patience endeavouring to make them comprehend you, and I have seen you when that could not be done. I have seen your lamb turned into a lion; by this your great labour and pains the public was entertained; they thought they all acted very fine—they did not see you pull the wires.

There are people now on the stage to whom you gave their consequence; they think themselves very great. Now let them go on in their new parts without your leading-strings, and they will soon convince the world what this genius is. I have always said this to everybody, even when your horses and mine were in their highest prancing. While I was under your control I did not say half the fine things I thought of you, because it looked like flattering, and you know your Pivy was always proud, because I thought you did not like me then, but now I am sure you do, which made me send this letter.

Catherine Clive to David Garrick

PLAYER *v.* MANAGER

February 19, 1768.

Sir,—I am sorry to give you this trouble, but I really cannot comprehend what you mean by saying you expected I should thanke the managers for their tender-

ness to me. I have allways been greatfull to every one who has obliged me, and if you will be so good as to point out the obligation I have to you and Mr. Lacy, I shall have great pleasure in acknowledging them. You tell me you have done all you *can* for me, and you *can* do *more*. I don't know how to understand that. Any one who sees your letter would suppose I was kept at your Theatre out of Charitey. If you still look over the number of times I have play'd this season, you must think I have desarv'd the monney you give me. You say you give me the best day in the week. I am sorry to say I cannot be of your opinion. St. Patrick's day is the very worst to me that can be. Mrs. Yates's might be the strongest Benefit, as her interest and mine clash in the Box's. As to my *quareling* you are under a very great misstake. There is nothing I dread so much, I have not spirits for that, tho' have for acting. You say that you have fixt the day, and have drawn a line under it that I may be sure I can have no other; therefore I must take it. But I must think it (and so will every impartial person) very hard that Mrs. Dancer should have her Benefit before Mrs. Clive. You may depend upon having no further trouble with me. Indeed, I flattered myself that as the greatest part was past of the season, and I had done everything you asked of me, in playing a very insignificant part on purpose to please you, *I say*, I was in hope's it would have ended as it had gone so far, without any unkindness. But I shall say no more than that,

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

C. Clive.

Catherine Clive to David Garrick

JEALOUSY

[1774 ?].

I *schreamed* at your parish business. I think I see you in your churchwardenship quareling for not making those brown loaves big enough; but for God's sake never think of being a justice of the peace, for the people will quarrel on purpose to be brought before you to hear you talk, so that you may have as much business upon the lawn as you had upon the boards. If I should live to be thawed, I will come to town on purpose to kiss you; and in the summer, as you say, I hope we shall see each other ten times as often, when we will talk, and dance, and sing, and send our heares laughing to their beds. . . .

O jealousey, thou raging pain,
Where shall I find my piece again.

I am in a great fuss. Pray what is the meaning of a quarter of a hundred Miss Moors coming purring about you with their poems and plays and romances; what, is the Pivy to be roused, and I don't understand it? Mrs. Garrick has been so good to say she would spare me a little corner of your heart, and I can tell the Miss Moors they shall not have one morsel of it. *What* do they pretend to take it by *force of lines?* If that's the case I shall write such verses as shall make them stare againe, and send them to Bristol with a flea in their ear! Here have I two letters, one and not one line, nay, you write to the Poulterer's woman rather than the Pivy, and order her to bring me the note; and the poor creature is so proud of a letter

from you that it has quite turn'd her head, and instead of picking her Poultry ; she is dancing about her shop, with a wisp of straw in her hand, like the poor Ophelia, singing :

How shou'd I your true love know?

And I must tell you, if you don't write to me directly and tell me a great deal of news, I believe I shall sing the next of the mad songs myself. I see your run always goes on, which gives me great pleasure—I shall be glad if you will lend it me (Colley Cibber). My love to my dear Mrs. Garrick. I suppose you have had a long letter of thanks from Miss Pope. I have had one from her all over transport. I feel vast happiness about that *afair*, and shall ever remember it as a great obligation you have confered on your,

PIVY CLIVE.

Catherine Clive to Miss Pope

MULTUM IN PARVO

TWICKENHAM, *October* 17, 1784.

MY DEAR POPY,—The jack I must have, and I suppose the cook will be as much delighted with it as a fine lady with a birthday suit. I send you walnuts, which are fine, but pray be moderate in your admiration, for they are dangerous dainties. John has carried about to my neighbours above six thousand, and he tells me there are as many still left ; indeed it is a most wonderful tree. Mrs. Prince has been robbed at two o'clock, at noon, of her gold watch and four guineas, and at the same time our two justices of sixpence

a-piece; they had like to be shott, for not having more. Everybody enquires after you and I deliver your compts. Poor Mrs. Hart is dead—well-spoken-of by everybody. I pity the poor old Weassel that is left behind.

Adieu, my dear Popy.

Yours ever,

C. CLIVE.

The jack must carry six or seven-and-twenty pounds. The waterman shall bring the money when I know what.

HANNAH MORE (1745–1833)

FOURTH daughter of a Bristol village schoolmaster, who at an early age showed her literary tastes and at seventeen published a drama. Coming to London, she met Johnson, the Garricks, Burke, and other lions of the day, but later her religious views were the means of her withdrawal from society and her subsequent devotion to the poor. Her works comprise, among others, a novel, "Cælebs in Search of a Wife," "Essays," and two tragedies, which were both acted; also her once very popular "Sacred Dramas."

To her Sister

GARRICK'S FUNERAL

ADELPHI, *February 2*, 1779.

We (Miss Cadogan and myself) went to Charing Cross to see the melancholy procession. Just as we got there we received a ticket from the Bishop of Rochester to admit us into the Abbey. No admittance could be obtained but under his hand. We hurried

away in a hackney coach, dreading to be too late. The bell of St. Martin's and the Abbey gave a sound that smote upon my very soul. When we got to the cloisters we found multitudes striving for admittance. We gave our ticket and were let in; but, unluckily, we ought to have kept it. We followed the man, who unlocked a door of iron, and directly closed it upon us and two or three others, and we found ourselves in a Tower, with a dark winding staircase, consisting of half a hundred stone steps. When we got to the top there was no way out; we ran down again, called, and beat the door, till the whole pile resounded with our cries. Here we stayed half an hour in perfect agony; we were sure it would be all over: nay, we might never be let out; we might starve—we might perish! At length our clamours brought an honest man, a guardian angel I then thought him. We implored him to take care of us, and get us into a part of the Abbey whence we might see the grave. He asked for the bishop's ticket; we had given it away to the wrong person; and he was not obliged to believe we ever had one; yet he saw so much truth in our grief, that though we were most shabby, and a hundred fine people were soliciting the same favour, he took us under each arm, carried us safely through the crowd, and put us in a little gallery directly over the grave, where we could see and hear everything as distinctly as if the Abbey had been a parlour. Little things sometimes affect the mind strongly! We were no sooner recovered from the fresh bursts of grief than I cast my eyes, the first thing, on Handel's monument, and read the scroll in his hand, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Just at three the great doors burst open with a noise

that shook the roof: the organ struck up, and the whole choir, in strains only less solemn than the archangel's trump, began Handel's fine anthem. The whole choir advanced to the grave, in hoods and surplices, singing all the way; then Sheridan as chief mourner; then the body—alas! whose body? with ten noblemen and gentlemen, pall bearers; then the rest of the friends and mourners; hardly a dry eye—the very players, bred to the trade of counterfeiting, shed genuine tears.

As soon as the body was let down, the bishop began the service, which was read in a low but solemn and devout manner. Such an awful stillness reigned that every word was audible. How I felt it! Judge if my heart did not assent to the hope that the soul of our dear brother now departed was in peace. And this is all of Garrick! Yet a very little while, and he shall "say to the worm, Thou art my brother: and to corruption, Thou art my mother and my sister." So passes away the fashion of this world. And the very night he was buried the play-houses were as full, and the Pantheon was as crowded, as if no such thing had happened; nay, the very mourners of the day partook of the revelries of the night—the same night, too!

As soon as the crowd had dispersed, our friend came to us with an invitation from the bishop's lady, to whom he had related our disaster, to come into the deanery. We were carried into her dressing-room, but, being incapable of speech, she very kindly said she would not interrupt such sorrow, and left us: but sent up wine, cakes, and all manner of good things, which were really well-timed. I caught no cold, notwithstanding all I went through.

On Wednesday night we came to the Adelphi—to this house! She[1] bore it with great tranquillity, but what was my surprise to see her go alone into the chamber and bed in which he had died that day fortnight. She had a delight in it beyond expression. I asked her the next day how she went through it? She told me, very well; that she first prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure.

Hannah More to a relative

GENERAL PAOLI

HAMPTON, 1782.

When I was in town last week we had another last breakfast at St. James's. There I found Lord Monboddo, Mrs. Carter, that pleasantest of the peerage, Lord Stormont, and Count Maréchale, a very agreeable foreign nobleman, and a worthy man; he has almost promised to put the story of our poor insane Louisa into German for me. I was three times with Mrs. Montague the week I stayed in town. We spent one evening with her and Miss Gregory alone, to take leave of the Hill Street house; and you never saw such an air of ruin and bankruptcy as everything around us wore. We had about three feet square of carpet, and that we might all put our feet upon it we were obliged to sit in a circle in the middle of the room, just as if we were playing at "hunt the slipper!" She was full of encomiums of Bristol, and of every one she saw there. She is now settled in Portman Square, where I

[1] Mrs. Garrick.

believe we were among the first to pay our compliments to her. I had no conception of anything so beautiful. To all the magnificence of a very superb London house is added the scenery of a country retirement. It is so seldom that anything superb is pleasant, that I was extremely struck with it. I could not help looking with compassion on the amiable proprietor shivering at a breeze, and who can at the best enjoy it so very little a while. She has, however, my ardent wishes for her continuance in a world to which she is an ornament and a blessing. . . .

. . . At a party the other day I was placed next General Paoli, and as I have not spoken seven sentences of Italian these seven years, I have not that facility in expressing myself which I used to have. I therefore begged hard to carry on the conversation in French. By-the-bye, I believe I never told you that Paoli is my chief beau and flirt this winter. We talk whole hours. He has a general good taste in the *belles lettres* and is fond of reciting passages from Dante and Aristotle. He is extremely lively when set a-going; quotes from Shakespeare, and raves in his praise. He is particularly fond of Romeo and Juliet; I suppose, because the scene is laid in Italy. I did not know he had such very agreeable talents; but he will not talk in English, and his French is mixed with Italian. He speaks no language with purity.

On Monday I was at a very great assembly at the Bishop of St. Asaph's. Conceive to yourself one hundred and fifty or two hundred people met together, dressed in the extremity of the fashion; painted as red as bacchanals, poisoning the air with perfumes; treading on each other's gowns; making the crowd

they blame; not one in ten able to get a chair; protesting they are engagèd to ten other places; and lamenting the fatigue they are not obliged to endure; ten or a dozen card-tables crammed with dowagers of quality, grave ecclesiastics and yellow admirals: and you have an idea of the assembly. I never go to these things when I can possibly avoid it, and stay, when there, as few minutes as I can.

Hannah More to Mr. Wilberforce

SPIRITUAL PRIVILEGES IN SOMERSET

George Hotel, Cheddar, 1789.

Dear Sir,—Though this is but a romantic place, as my friend Mathew well observed, yet you would laugh to see the bustle I am in. I was told we should meet with great opposition if I did not try to propitiate the chief despot of the village, who is very rich and very brutal; so I ventured into the den of this monster, in a country as savage as himself, near Bridgewater. He begged I would not think of bringing any religion into the country: it was the worst thing in the world for the poor, for it made them lazy and useless. In vain did I represent to him that they would be more industrious as they were better principled; and that, for my own part, I had no selfish views in what I was doing. He gave me to understand that he knew the world too well to believe either the one or the other. Somewhat dismayed to find that my success bore no proportion to my submissions, I was almost discouraged from more visits; but I found that friends must be secured at all events, for that if these rich savages set

their faces against us, and influenced the poor people, it was clear that nothing but hostilities would ensue; so I made eleven more of these agreeable visits, and as I improved in the art of canvassing, had better success. Miss Wilberforce would have been shocked had she seen the petty tyrants whose insolence I stroked and tamed, the ugly children I fondled, the pointers and spaniels I caressed, the cider I commended, and the wine I swallowed. After these irresistible flatteries, I inquired of each if he could recommend to me a house; and said that I had a little plan, which I hoped would secure their orchards from being robbed, their rabbits from being shot, their poultry from being stolen, and which might lower the poor-rates. If effect be the best proof of eloquence, then mine was a good speech, for I gained at length the hearty concurrence of the whole people, and their promise to discourage or favour the poor in proportion as they were attentive or negligent in sending their children. Patty, who is with me, says she has good hope that the hearts of some of these rich poor wretches may be touched; they are at present as ignorant as the beasts that perish, intoxicated every day before dinner, and plunge in such vices as make me begin to think London a virtuous place. By their assistance I procured immediately a good house, which, when a partition is taken down, and a window added, will receive a great number of children. The house, and an excellent garden of almost an acre of ground, I have taken at once for six guineas and a half per year. I have ventured to take it for seven years; there's courage for you! It is to be put in order immediately, "for the night cometh;" and it is a comfort to think that, though I may be dust and ashes

in a few weeks, yet by that time this business will be in actual motion. I have written to different manufacturing towns for a mistress, but can get nothing hitherto. As to the mistress for the Sunday-school, and the religious part, I have employed Mrs. Easterbrook, of whose judgment I have a good opinion. I hope Miss W—— will not be frightened, but I am afraid she must be called a Methodist.

I asked the farmers if they have no resident curate; they told me they had a right to insist on one, which right, they confessed, they had never ventured to exercise, for fear their tithes should be raised! I blushed for my species. The Glebe House is good for my purpose. The vicarage of Cheddar is in the gift of the Dean of Wells; the value nearly fifty pounds per annum. The incumbent is a Mr. R——, who has something to do, but I cannot here find out what, in the University of Oxford, where he resides. The curate lives at Wells, twelve miles distant. They have only one service a week, and there is scarcely an instance of a poor person being visited, or prayed with. The living of Axbridge belongs to the prebendary of Wiveliscombe, in the diocese of Wells. The annual value is about fifty pounds. The incumbent about sixty years of age. The prebend to which this rectory belongs is in the gift of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Mr. G—— is intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently is prevented from preaching by two black eyes, honestly earned by fighting. Mr. M—— is a middle-aged man: of his character they know nothing. The curate a sober young man.

Your much obliged,

H. More.

ANNA SEWARD (1747–1809)

THE "Swan of Lichfield," was the daughter of a Canon of Lichfield. After her father's death Miss Seward lived on in that city at the bishop's palace, where she was one of the chief members of a self-admiring coterie. Southey, Darwin, Thomas Day, and Walter Scott were her correspondents, and the *Wizard of the North*, much to his embarrassment, was named in her will as literary executor.

LAST DAYS OF DR. JOHNSON

[LICHFIELD] *October* 29, 1784.

I have lately been in the almost daily habit of contemplating a very melancholy spectacle. The great Johnson is here, labouring under the paroxysms of a disease which must speedily be fatal. He shrinks from the consciousness with the extremest horror. It is by his repeatedly expressed desire that I visit him often: yet I am sure he neither does, nor ever did feel much regard for me; but he would fain escape, for a time, in any society, from the terrible idea of his approaching dissolution. I never would be awed by his sarcasms, or his frowns, into acquiescence with his general injustice to the merits of *other* writers, with his national or party aversions; but I feel the truest compassion for his present sufferings, and fervently wish I had power to relieve them.

A few days since I was to drink tea with him, by his request, at Mrs. Porter's. When I went into the room he was in deep but agitated slumber, in an arm-chair. Opening the door with that caution due to the sick, he did not awaken at my entrance. I stood by him several minutes, mournfully contemplating the

temporary suspension of those vast intellectual powers which must, so soon, as to *this* world, be eternally quenched.

Upon the servant entering to announce the arrival of a gentleman of the university, introduced by Mr. White, he awoke with convulsive starts; but rising, with more alacrity than could have been expected, he said, "Come, my dear lady, let you and I attend these gentlemen in the study." He received them with more than usual complacence; but whimsically chose to get astride upon his chair-seat, with his face to its back, keeping a trotting motion as if on horseback; but in this odd position he poured forth streams of eloquence, illumined by frequent flashes of wit and humour without any tincture of malignity. That amusing part of this conversation which alluded to the learned Pig and his demi-rational exhibitions, I shall transmit to you hereafter.

Anna Seward to Lady Marianne Carnegie

AN ELEGANT EPISTLE

LICHFIELD, *March* 21, 1785.

Your Ladyship's kind attention and most welcome letter highly gratifies, obliges, and honours me. Since I learned the melancholy tidings of dear and honoured Lady Northesk's death, I felt what I believed an unavailing desire to obtain more particular intelligence than I had the means of acquiring concerning the welfare and situation of her lord and of sweet Lady Marianne, whose virtues, and graces were in their bud when I had the honour of passing a week in Lady

Northesk's, Lady Marianne's and Mrs. Scott's society at Lichfield, in the house of Dr. Darwin. Mournful was that pleasure, because of the fearful balance in which then hung the valuable life of Lady Northesk. Ah! with what delight did I learn, from her condescending letters to me, of the return of her health, by the prescriptions of Dr. Darwin, after those of the London and Bath physicians had failed! Sincerely did I deplore the sudden blight upon those hopes of her long existence which were inspired by that unexpected, that wonderful recovery.

To be thus engagingly sought, through motives of filial piety by a daughter of hers, gives me satisfaction, which is not the less poignant for being shaded over by a sense of mournful gratitude to the ETERNALLY ABSENT.

I am happy to hear you say Lord Northesk is well. You do not mention your own health. During that transient residence at Lichfield, I observed with pain that your Ladyship's constitution was very delicate. The years of advancing youth have, I trust, brought strength and bloom on their wing.

For both your sakes I regret that intelligent and amiable Mrs. Scott is removed so far from you. She must often wish to embrace the lovely daughter of a lost friend—a friend so dear and so revered!

The style of Lady Marianne's letter convinces me that she has a mind whose tastes, pursuits, and sensibilities preclude the irksome lassitude with which retirement is apt to inspire people at her sprightly time of life. Ah! dearest Madam, may the consciousness of cheering the declining years of a beloved father gild the silent hours, when the rocks frown round you

with solemn sternness, and the winds of winter are howling over the ocean.

Almost five years are elapsed since Dr. Darwin left Lichfield. A handsome young widow, relict of Colonel Pole, by whom she had three children, drew from us, in the hymeneal chain, our celebrated physician, our poetic and witty friend.

The Doctor was in love like a very *Celadon*, and a numerous young family are springing up in consequence of a union which was certainly a little unaccountable; not that there was any wonder that a fine, graceful, and affluent young woman should fascinate a grave philosopher; but that a sage of so elegant external, and sunk into the vale of years, should, by so gay a lady, be preferred to younger, richer, and handsomer suitors, was the marvel; specially since, though lively, benevolent, and by no means deficient in native wit, she was never suspected of a taste for science, or works of imagination. Yet so it was; and she makes her ponderous spouse a very attached and indeed devoted wife! The poetic philosopher, in return, transfers the amusement of his leisure hours from the study of botany and mechanics, and the composition of odes and heroic verses, to fabricating riddles and charades! Thus employed, his mind is somewhat in the same predicament with Hercules' body when he sat amongst the women and handled the distaff.

Dr. Darwin finds himself often summoned to Lichfield; indeed whatever symptoms of danger arise in the diseases of those whose fortunes are at all competent to the expense of employing a distant physician. When I see him he shall certainly be informed how kindly your Ladyship enquires after his welfare and that

of his family. His eldest son by his first wife, who was one of the most enlightened and charming of women, died of a putrid fever while he was studying physic at Edinburgh with the most sedulous attention and the most promising ingenuity. His second is an attorney at Derby, of very distinguished merit both as to intellect and virtue; and your playfellow, Robert, grown to an uncommon height, gay and blooming as a morn of summer, pursues medical studies in Scotland, under happier auspices, I hope, than his poor brother.

I had the misfortune to lose my mother in the year 1780. My dearest father *yet* lives, but his existence hangs by a very slender thread; since, however, he suffers no pain nor depression of spirits, I bless God that he yet lifts up his feeble hands to bless me.

Lady Marianne Carnegie has no reason to doubt her epistolary talents. The proof of their elegance is before me; but dearer far is their *kindness* than their *grace*. Ah! Madam, the affection which that kindness has excited in my heart creates a tender interest in all you say to me, beyond the reach of literary communication, scenic description, or the most brilliant wit to inspire, unaided by that sentiment which binds me to you! I am, Madam, etc.

Anna Seward to

AN OLD MAID

January 30, 1786

Apropos of old maids, after a gradual decline of a few months, we have lost, dear Mrs. Porter, the earliest object of Dr. Johnson's love. This was some years

before he married her mother. In youth, her fair, clear complexion, bloom, and rustic prettiness, pleased the men. More than once she might have married advantageously; but, as to the enamoured affections,

> High Taurus' snow, fann'd by the eastern wind,
> Was not more cold.

Spite of the accustomed petulance of her temper, and odd perverseness, since she had no malignance I regret her as a friendly creature, of intrinsic worth, with whom, from childhood, I had been intimate. She was one of those few beings who, from a sturdy singularity of temper, and some prominent good qualities of head and heart, was enabled, even in her days of scanty maintenance, to make society glad to receive and pet the grown spoiled child. Affluence was not hers till it came to her in her fortieth year, by the death of her eldest brother. From the age of twenty till hat period she had boarded in Lichfield with Dr. Johnson's mother, who still kept that little bookseller's shop by which her husband had supplied the scanty means of existence. Meanwhile, Lucy Porter kept the best company of our little city, but would make no engagement on market-days, lest Granny, as she called Mrs. Johnson, should catch cold by serving in the shop. There Lucy Porter took her place, standing behind the counter, nor thought it a disgrace to thank a poor person who purchased from her a penny battledore.

With a marked vulgarity of address and language, and but unintellectual cultivation, she had a certain shrewdness of understanding and piquant humour, with the most perfect truth and integrity. By these

good traits in her character were the most respectable inhabitants of this place induced to bear, with kind smiles, her mulish obstinacy and perverse contradictions. Johnson himself, often her guest, set the example, and extended to her that compliant indulgence which he shewed not to any other person. I have heard her scold him like a school-boy for soiling her floor with his shoes, for she was clean as a Dutch woman in her house, and exactly neat in her person. Dress too she loved in her odd way; but we will not assert that the Graces were her handmaids. Friendly, cordial, and cheerful to those she loved, she was more esteemed, more amusing, and more regretted than many a polished character, over whose smooth but insipid surface the attention of those who have mind passes listless and uninterested. . . .

Adieu. Do I flatter myself inordinately by the idea that I am sometimes regretted in that circle at Wellsburn, which so well understands how to speed and illuminate the winter's day?

FRANCES BURNEY (MADAME D'ARBLAY) (1752–1840)

A DAUGHTER of Dr. Burney, organist, of Lynn. She began writing at the age of ten, but on her fifteenth birthday burnt all she had written. In 1778 "Evelina," her first book, was published anonymously, but Dr. Burney recognised his daughter's writing, and soon told Mrs. Thrale, with whom she became a great favourite. She was also a friend of Dr. Johnson, and other well-known people of her day. Through the influence of Mrs. Delany, she held an appointment in the Royal Household, but eventually resigned it owing to ill-health. In 1793 she was married to General D'Arblay,

a French refugee, and after some years' residence in England, they went to live near Paris. Fanny Burney wrote other books: a Tragedy in which Mrs. Siddons and Kemble appeared, and her deservedly well-known Journal and Letters.

To Mrs. Thrale

TAKING TEA WITH DR. JOHNSON

July 1780.

Nobody does write such sweet letters as my dear Mrs. Thrale, and I would sooner give up a month's allowance of meat than my week's allowance of an epistle.

The report of the Parliament's dissolution I hope is premature. I inquire of everybody I see about it, and always hear that it is expected now to last almost as long as it can last. Why, indeed, should Government wish to dissolve it, when they meet with no opposition from it?

Since I wrote last I have drunk tea with Dr. Johnson. My father took me to Bolt Court, and we found him most fortunately, with only one brass-headed-cane gentleman. Since that, I have had the pleasure to meet him again at Mrs. Reynolds's, when he offered to take me with him to Grub Street, to see the ruins of the house demolished there in the late riots, by a mob that, as he observed, could be no friend to the Muses! He inquired if I had ever yet visited Grub Street, but was obliged to restrain his anger when I answered "No," because he acknowledged he had never paid his respects to it himself. "However," says he, "you and I, Burney, will go together; we have a very good right to go, so we'll visit the mansions of

our progenitors, and take up our own freedom together."

There's for you, madam! What can be grander? The loss of Timoleon is really terrible; yet, as it is an incident that will probably dwell no little time upon the author's mind, who knows but it may be productive of another tragedy, in which a dearth of story will not merely be no fault of his, but no misfortune?

I have no intelligence to give about the Dean of Coleraine, but that we are now in daily expectation of hearing of his arrival.

Yesterday I drank tea at Sir Joshua's and met by accident with Mrs. Cholmondeley. I was very glad to find that her spirits are uninjured by her misfortunes; she was as gay, flighty, entertaining and frisky as ever. Her *sposo* is not confined, as was said; he is only gone upon his travels: she seems to bear his absence with remarkable fortitude. After all, there is something in her very attractive; her conversation is so spirited, so humorous, so enlivening, that she does not suffer one's attention to rest, much less to flag, for hours together.

Sir Joshua told me he was now at work upon your pictures, touching them up for Streatham, and that he has already ordered the frames, and shall have them quite ready whenever the house is in order for them.

I also met at his house Mr. W. Burke, and young Burke, the orator's son, who is made much ado about, but I saw not enough of him to know why.

We are all here very truly concerned for Mr. Chamier, who, you know, is a very great favourite among us. He is very ill, and thinks himself in a decline. He is now at Bath, and writes my father word he has made up his mind, come what may.

Your good news of my master glads me, however, beyond what good news of almost any other man in the world could do. Pray give him my best respects, and beg him not to forget me so much as to look strange upon me when we next meet; if he does it won't be fair, for I feel that I shall look very kind upon him.

I fancy Miss Thrale is quite too difficult; why bless me, by "something happening"? I never meant to wait for a murder, nor a wedding, no, nor an invasion, nor an insurrection; any other horror will do as well. My father charges me to give you his kindest love, and not daintify his affection into respects or compliments.

Adieu, dearest madam, and from me accept not only love, and not only respects, but both, and gratitude, and warmest wishes, and constancy invariable into the bargain.

F. Burney.

I am very glad Mr. Tidy is so good. Thank him for me, and tell him I am glad he keeps my place open; and pray give Dr. Delap my compliments. Has he settled yet how he shall dress the candle-snuffers the first night? I would by no means have the minutest directions omitted.

Fanny Burney to Mrs. Burney

COURT ETIQUETTE

Windsor, *December* 17, 1785.

My dearest Hetty,—I am sorry I could not more immediately write; but I really have not had a moment since your last.

Now I know what your next want is, to hear accounts of kings, queens, and such royal personages. O no! do you so? Well.

Shall I tell you a few matters of fact?—or, had you rather a few matters of etiquette? Oh, matters of etiquette you cry! for matters of fact are short and stupid, and anybody can tell, and everybody is tired with them.

Very well, take your own choice.

To begin, then, with the beginning.

You know I told you in my last my various difficulties, what sort of preferment to turn my thoughts to, and concluded with just starting a young budding notion of decision, by suggesting that a handsome pension for nothing at all would be as well as working night and day for a salary.

This blossom of an idea, the more I dwelt upon, the more I liked. Thinking served it for a hot-house, and it came out into full blow as I ruminated upon my pillow. Delighted that thus all my contradictory and wayward fancies were overcome, and my mind was peaceably settled what to wish and what to demand, I gave over all further meditation upon choice of elevation and had nothing more to do but to make my election known.

My next business, therefore, was to be presented. This could be no difficulty; my coming hither had been their own desire, and they had earnestly pressed its execution. I had only to prepare myself for the rencounter.

You would never believe—you, who, distant from courts and courtiers, know nothing of their ways—the many things to be studied for appearing with a

proper propriety before crowned heads. Heads without crowns are quite other sort of rotundas.

Now then to the etiquette. I inquired into every particular, that no error might be committed. And as there is no saying what may happen in this mortal life, I shall give you those instructions I have received myself, that, should you find yourself in the royal presence, you may know how to comport yourself.

Directions for Coughing, Sneezing, or Moving, before the King and Queen.

In the first place, you must not cough. If you find a cough tickling in your throat, you must arrest it from making any sound; if you find yourself choking with the forbearance, you must choke—but not cough.

In the second place, you must not sneeze. If you have a vehement cold, you must take no notice of it; if your nose-membranes feel a great irritation, you must hold your breath; if a sneeze still insists upon making its way, you must oppose it, by keeping your teeth grinding together; if the violence of the repulse breaks some blood-vessel, you must break the blood-vessel—but not sneeze.

In the third place, you must not, upon any account, stir either hand or foot. If, by chance, a black pin runs into your head, you must not take it out. If the pain is very great, you must be sure to bear it without wincing; if it brings the tears into your eyes, you must not wipe them off; if they give you a tingling by running down your cheeks, you must look as if nothing was the matter. If the blood should gush from your head, by means of the black pin, you must let it gush; if you are uneasy to think of making such a blurred appearance, you must be uneasy, but you

must say nothing about it. If, however, the agony is very great, you may, privately, bite the inside of your cheek, or of your lips, for a little relief, taking care, meanwhile, to do it so cautiously as to make no apparent dent outwardly. And with that precaution, if you even gnaw a piece out, it will not be minded, only be sure either to swallow it, or commit it to a corner of the inside of your mouth till they are gone—for you must not spit.

I have many other directions, but no more paper; I will endeavour, however, to have them ready for you in time. Perhaps, meanwhile you would be glad to know if I have myself had opportunity to put in practice these receipts.

How can I answer in this little space? My love to Mr. B—— and the little ones, and remember me kindly to cousin Edward, and believe me, my dearest Esther,

Most affectionately yours,

F. B.

Fanny Burney to Mrs. Lock.

HER MAJESTY'S CHICKENS

KEW, *April* 1789.

MY DEAREST FRIENDS,—I have her Majesty's commands to enquire—whether you have any of a certain breed of poultry?

N.B.—*What* breed I do not remember.

And to say she has just received a small group of the same herself.

N.B.—The quantity I have forgotten.

And to add, she is assured they are something very rare and scarce, and extraordinary and curious.

N.B.—By *whom* she was assured I have not heard.

And to subjoin, that you must send word if you have any of the same sort.

N.B.—How you are to find that out, I cannot tell.

And to mention, as a corollary, that if you have none of them, and should like to have some, she has a cock and a hen she can spare, and will appropriate them to Mr. Lock and my dearest Freddy.

This conclusive stroke so pleased and exhilarated me, that forthwith I said you would be both enchanted, and so forgot all the preceding particulars.

And I said, moreover, that I knew you would rear them, and cheer them, and fondle them like your children.

So now—pray write a very *fair answer* fairly, in fair hand, and to fair purpose.

My Susanna is just now come—so all is fair with my dearest Mr. and Mrs. Lock's.

F. B.

Fanny Burney to her father, Dr. Burney

DORSET LOYALTY

Gloucester House, Weymouth, *July* 13, 1789.

. . . Col. Goldsworthy has just sent me in a newspaper containing intelligence that Angelica Kauffmann is making drawings from "Evelina" for the Empress of Russia? Do you think the Empress of Russia hears of anything now besides Turkey and the Emperor? And is not Angelica Kauffmann dead? O what an *Oracle*! for such is the paper called.

His Majesty is in delightful health, and much improved spirits All agree he never looked better.

The loyalty of all this place is excessive; they have dressed out every street with labels of "God save the King!" all the shops have it over the doors; all the children wear it in their caps, all the labourers in their hats, and all the sailors *in their voices*, for they never approach the house without shouting it aloud, nor see the King, or his shadow, without beginning to huzza, and going on to three cheers.

The bathing-machines make it their motto over all their windows; and those bathers that belong to the royal dippers wear it in bandeaux on their bonnets, to go into the sea; and have it again, in large letters, round their waists, to encounter the waves.

Flannel dresses, tucked up, and no shoes or stockings, with bandeaux and girdles, have a most singular appearance; and when first I surveyed these loyal nymphs it was with some difficulty I kept my features in order.

Nor is this all. Think but of the surprise of his Majesty when, the first time of his bathing, he had no sooner popped his royal head under water than a band of music, concealed in a neighbouring machine, struck up "God save Great George our King."

One thing, however, was a little unlucky. When the Mayor and burgesses came with the address, they requested leave to shake hands. This was graciously accorded; but, the Mayor advancing, in a common way, *to take the Queen's hand*, as he might that of any Lady Mayoress, Colonel Gwynn, who stood by, whispered "You must kneel, sir." He found, however, that he took no notice of this hint, but kissed the Queen's hand erect. As he passed him, in his way back, the Colonel said, "You should have knelt, sir!"

"Sir," answered the poor Mayor, "I cannot."

"Everybody does, sir."

"Sir—I have a wooden leg."

Poor man! 'twas such a surprise! and such an excuse as no one could dispute.

But the absurdity of the matter followed;—all the rest did the same; taking the same privilege, by the example, without the same or any cause.

We have just got Mrs. Piozzi's book[1] here. My Royal Mistress is reading and will then lend it me. Have you read it? . . . A thousand thanks for your home news.

I am, most dear Sir,

Affectionately and dutifully, your

F. B.

Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay) to Mrs. ——

FANNY BURNEY'S MARRIAGE

1793.

The account of your surprise, my sweet friend, was the last thing to create mine. I was well aware of the general astonishment, and of yours in particular. My own, however, at my very extraordinary fate, is singly greater than that of all my friends united. I had never made any vow against marriage, but I had long, long, been firmly persuaded it was for me a state of too much hazard and too little promise to draw me from my individual plans and purposes. I remember, in playing at questions and commands, when I was thirteen, being asked when I intended to marry, and surprising my playmates by solemnly replying, "When I think I shall be happier than I am in being

[1] Her "Journey through France, Italy and Germany."

single." It is true I imagined that time would never arrive; and I have pertinaciously adhered to trying no experiment upon any other hope; for, many and mixed as are the ingredients which form what is generally considered as happiness, I was always fully convinced that social sympathy of character and taste could alone have any chance with me; all else, I always thought, and now know, to be immaterial. I have only this peculiar—that what many contentedly assert or adopt in theory, I have had the courage to be guided by practice. . . . As my partner is a Frenchman, I conclude the wonder raised by the connexion may spread beyond my own private circle; but no wonder upon earth can ever arrive near my own in having found such a character from that nation. This is a prejudice certainly, impertinent and very John Bullish, and very arrogant; but I only share it with all my countrymen, and therefore must needs forgive both them and myself. I am convinced, however, from your tender solicitude for me in all ways, that you will be glad to hear that the Queen and all the Royal Family have deigned to send me wishes for my happiness through Mrs. Schwellenberg, who has written me "what you call" a very kind congratulation. . . .

F. D'A.

Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay) to her father, Dr. Burney

AN OPERATION

Bookham, *March* 16, 1797.

My dearest Padre,—Relieved at length from a terror that almost from the birth of my little darling has

hung upon my mind, with what confidence in your utmost kindness do I call for your participation in my joy that all alarm is over, and Mr. Ansel has taken his leave! I take this large sheet, to indulge in a Babiania, which "dear grandpa" will, I am sure, receive with partial pleasure, upon this most important event to his poor little gentleman.

When Mr. Ansel came to perform the dreaded operation, he desired me to leave the child to him and the maid; but my agitation was not of that sort: I wished for the experiment upon the most mature deliberation; but while I trembled with the suspense of its effect, I could not endure to lose a moment from the beloved little object for and with whom I was running such a risk.

He sat upon my lap, and Mr. Ansel gave him a bit of barley-sugar, to obtain his permission for pulling off one sleeve of his frock and shirt. He was much surprised at this opening to an acquaintance—for Ansel made no previous visit, having sent his directions by M. D'Arblay. However, the barley-sugar occupied his mouth, and inclined him to a favourable interpretation, though he stared with upraised eyebrows. Mr. Ansel bid Betty hold him a plaything at the other side, to draw off his eyes from what was to follow, and I began a little history to him of the misfortunes of the toy we chose, which was a drummer, maimed in his own service, and whom he loves to lament, under the name of "The poor man that has lost his face." But all my pathos and all his own ever-ready pity were ineffectual to detain his attention when he felt his arm grasped by Mr. Ansel; he repulsed Betty, the soldier, and his mamma, and turned about with a quickness

that disengaged him from Mr. Ansel, who now desired me to hold his arm. This he resisted, yet held it out himself with unconscious intrepidity, in full sight of the lancet, which he saw hovering over it, without the most remote suspicion of its slaughtering design, and with a rather amused look of curiosity to see what was intended. When the incision was made he gave a little scream, but it was momentary, and ended in a look of astonishment at such an unprovoked infliction that exceeds all description, all painting, and in turning an appealing eye to me, as if demanding at once explanation and protection.

My fondest praises now made him understand that non-resistance was an act of virtue, and again he held out his little arm, at our joint entreaty, but resolutely refused to have it held by any one. Mr. Ansel pressed out the blood with his lancet again and again, and wiped the instrument upon the wound for two or three minutes, fearing, from the excessive strictness of his whole life's regimen, he might still escape the venom. The dear child coloured at sight of the blood, and seemed almost petrified with amazement, fixing his wondering eyes upon Mr. Ansel with an expression that sought to dive into his purpose, and then upon me, as if enquiring how I could approve of it.

When this was over, Mr. Ansel owned himself still apprehensive it might not take, and asked if I should object to his inoculating the other arm. I told him I committed the whole to his judgement, as M. D'Arblay was not at home. And now, indeed, his absence from this scene, which he would have enjoyed with the proudest forebodings of future courage, became doubly regretted, for my little hero, though probably aware

of what would follow, suffered me to bare his other arm, and held it out immediately, while looking at the lancet ; nor would he again have it supported or tightened ; and he saw and felt the incision without shrinking, and without any marks of displeasure.

But though he appeared convinced by my caresses that the thing was right, and that his submission was good, he evidently thought the deed was unaccountable as it was singular ; and all his faculties seemed absorbed in profound surprise. I shall never cease being sorry his father did not witness this, to clear my character from having adulterated the chivalric spirit and courage of his race. Mr. Ansel confessed he had never similar instance in one so very young, and, kissing his forehead when he had done, said, " Indeed, little sir, I am in love with you."

Since this, however, my stars have indulged me in the satisfaction of exhibiting his native bravery where it gives most pride as well as pleasure ; for his father was in the room when, the other day, Mr. Ansel begged leave to take some matter from his arm for some future experiments. And the same scene was repeated. He presented the little creature with a bonbon, and then showed his lancet : he let his arm be bared unresistingly, and suffered him to make four successive cuts, to take matter for four lancets, never crying, nor being either angry or frightened, but only looking inquisitively at us all in turn, with eyes you would never have forgotten had you beheld, that seemed disturbed by a curiosity they could not satisfy, to find some motive for our extraordinary proceedings.

Immediately before the inoculation the faculty of speech seemed most opportunely accorded him, and

that with a sudden facility that reminded me of your account of his mother's first, though so late reading. At noon he repeated after me, when I least expected it, "How do do?" and the next morning, as soon as he awoke, he called out, "How do, mamma? How do, papa?" I give you leave to guess if the question was inharmonious. From that time he has repeated readily whatever we have desired; and yesterday, while he was eating his dry toast, perceiving the cat, he threw her a bit, calling out, "Eat it, Buff!" Just now, taking the string that fastens his gown round his neck, he said, "Ett's tie it on, mamma," and when, to try him, I bid him say naughty papa, he repeated, "Naughty papa," as if mechanically; but the instant after, springing from mine to his arms, he kissed him, and said, "Dood papa," in a voice so tender it seemed meant as an apology.

F. D'A.

LADY HAMILTON (Emma Hart) (1763-1815)

was of humble origin and at one time a servant-maid. Her rare beauty attracted the attention of Romney, who painted over twenty portraits of her. She turned the heads of more than one man of importance in his day—Charles Greville, Sir William Hamilton, and lastly Lord Nelson. She died in poverty and neglect at Calais in 1815.

To Hon. Charles Greville, M.P.

THE BACCHANTE

NAPLES, *July* 22, 1786.

MY EVER DEAREST GREVILLE,—I am now onely writing to beg of you for God's sake to send me one letter, if it

is onely a farewell. Sure I have deserved this, for the sake of the love you once had for me. . . . So, pray, let me beg of you, my much loved Greville, only one line from your dear, dear hands. You don't know how thankful I shall be for it. For if you knew the misery [I] feel, oh! your heart would not be intirely shut up against me; for I love you with the truest affection. Don't let anybody sett you against me. Some of your friends—your foes, perhaps; I don't know what to stile them have long wisht me ill. But, Greville, you never will meet with anybody that has a truer affection for you than I have, and I onely wish it was in my power to shew you what I could do for you. As soon as I know your determination I shall take my own measures. If I don't hear from you, and that you are coming according to promise, I shall be in England at Christmas at farthest. Don't be unhappy at that. I will see you once more, for the last time, I find life is unsupportable without you. Oh, my heart is intirely broke. Then, for God's sake, my ever dear Greville, do write to me some comfort. I don't know what to do. I am now in that state I am incapable of anything. I have [a] language-master, a singing-master, musick, etc., but what is it for? If it was to amuse you, I should be happy. But, Greville, what will it avail me? I am poor, helpeless and forlorn. . . . But no more, I will trust to providence; and wherever you go, God bless you and preserve you, and may you allways be happy! But write to Sir William. What as he done to affront?

If I have spirits I will tell you something concerning how we go on, that will make my letter worth paying for. Sir William wants a picture of me the size of the Bacante, for his new apartment, and he will take that

picture of me, in the black gown at Romney's, and I have made the bargain with him, that the picture shall be yours, if he will pay for it, and he will, and I have wrote to Romney to send it.

Their is two painters now in the house, painting me. One picture is finished. It is the size of the Bacante, setting in a turbin and Turkish dress. The other is in a black rubin hat with wite feathers, blue silk gown, etc. But as soon as these is finished, ther is two more to paint me,—and Angelaca, if she comes. And Marchmont is to cut a head of me, for a ring. I wish Angelaca would come ; for Prince Draydrixton from Veina is hear and dines with us often, and he wants a picture of me. He is my cavaliere—servente. He is much in love with me. I walk in the Villa Reale every night. I have generally two Princes, two or 3 nobles, the English minister, and the King with a crowd beyound us. The Q [ueen] likes me much and desired Prince Draydrixtone to walk with me near her, that she might get a sight of me. For the Prince when he is not with ous, is with the Queen, and he does nothing but entertain her with my beauty, the accounts of it, etc. But, Greville, the king as eyes he as a heart, and I have made an impression on it. . . . I must tell you a piece of gallantry of the K. . . . On Sunday he dines at Paysilipo, and he allways comes every Sunday before the casina in his boat to look at me. We had a small deplomatic party, and we was sailing in our boat, the K. directly came up, put his boat of musick next us, and made all the French horns and the whole band play. He took of his hat, and sett with his hat on his knees all the wile, and when we was going to land he made his bow, and said it was a sin he could not speak English. But I have him in my

train every night at the Villa or Oppera. I have been to Pompea, etc., etc. and we are going next week round the Island Carprea, Ischea, etc. We shall be awhay a little while. I should feil pleasure in all this, if you was heare. But that blessing I have not, and so I must make the best of my lot. God bless you ! I would write a longer letter. But I am going to Paysylipo to diner, and I have a conversazzione to night and a concert.

I bathe every day. I have not any irruptions, and —what will surprise you—I am so remarkably fair, that everybody says I put on red and white. . . .

We have had dreadful thunder and lightening. It fell at the Maltese minister's just by our house and burnt is beds and wires, etc. I have now persuaded Sir William to put up a conductor to his house. The lava runs a little, but the mountain is very full, and we expect an iruption every day. I must stop, or else I shall begin to tell you my ideas of the people of Naples. In my next I will. I shall write you an Italian letter soon. God bless you. Make my compliments to your brother and all your friends thats my friends. Pray write to Yours ever—with the truest and sincerest affection—God bless you—write my ever dear, dear Greville.

EMMA.

Emma Hart (Lady Hamilton) to Sir William Hamilton

A VISIT TO THE CONVENT

Wednesday, January 10, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR WM.,—I had hardly time to thank you for your kind letter of this morning as I was buisy prepairing for to go on my visit to the Convent of St.

Romita ; and endead I am glad I went, tho' it was a short visit. But to-morrow I dine with them in full assembly. I am quite charmed with Beatrice Acquaviva. Such is the name of the charming whoman I saw to-day. Oh, Sir William, she is a pretty whoman. She is 29 years old. She took the veil at twenty, and does not repent to this day, though, if I am a judge of physiognomy, her eyes does not look like the eyes of a nun. They are allways laughing, and something in them vastly alluring, and I wonder the men of Naples would suffer the onely pretty whoman who is realy pretty to be shut in a convent. But it is like the mean-spirited ill taste of the Neapolitans. I told her I wondered how she would be lett to hide herself from the world, and I daresay thousands of tears was shed, the day she deprived Naples of one of its greatest ornaments. She answered with a sigh, that endead numbers of tears was shed, and once or twice her resolution was allmost shook, but a pleasing comfort she felt at regaining her friends, that she had been brought up [with], and religious considerations strengthened her mind, and she parted with the world with pleasure, and since that time one of her sisters had followed her example, and another—which I saw—was preparing to enter soon. But neither of her sisters is so beautiful as her, tho' the[y] are booth very agreable. But I think Beatrice is charming, and I realy feil for her an affection. Her eyes, Sir William, is I don't know how to describe them. I stopt one hour with them, and I had all the good things to eat, and I promise you they don't starve themselves. But there dress is very becoming, and she told me that she was allowed to wear rings and muffs and any little thing she liked, and endead she displayd to-day

a good deal of finery, for she had 4 or 5 dimond rings on her fingers, and seemed fond of her muff. She has excelent teeth and shows them, for she is allways laughing. She kissed my lips, cheeks and forehead, and every moment exclaimed "charming fine creature," admired my dres, said I looked like an angel, for I was in clear wite dimity and a blue sash. She admired my hat and fine hair, and she said she had heard I was good to the poor, and generous and noble-minded "Now," she says, "it would be worth wile to live for such a one as you. Your good heart would melt at any trouble that befel me, and partake of one's greef or be equaly happy at one's good fortune. But I never met with a freind yet, or I ever saw a person I could love tell now, and you shall have proofs of my love." In short I sat and listened to her, and the tears stood in my eyes, I don't know why; but I loved her at that moment. I thought what a charming wife she would have made, what a mother of a family, and what a freind, and the first good and amiable whoman I have seen since I came to Naples for to be lost to the world—how cruel! She give me a satten pocket-booke of her own work, and bid me think of her, when I saw it and was many miles far off; and years hence when she peraps should be no more, to look at it, and think the person that give it had not a bad heart. Did not she speak very pretty? but not one word of religion; but I shall be happy today, for I shall dine with them all and come home at night. It is a beautiful house and garden, and the attention of them was very pleasing. There is sixty whomen and all well-looking, but not like the fair Beatrice. "Oh Emma," she says to me, "the[y] brought here the Vieve (?) minister's wife, but I did

not like the looks of her at first. She was little short pinched-face, and I receved her cooly. How different from you, and how surprised was I in seeing you tall in statue. We may read your heart in your countenance, your complexion, in short, your figure and features is rare, for you are like the marble statues I saw, when I was in the world." I think she flatered me up, but I was pleased. . . . my dear Sir William,

Your truly affectionate

EMMA.

Lady Hamilton to the Honourable Charles Greville

NELSON AT NAPLES

On board the *Foudroyant*, BAY OF NAPLES, *July* 19. 1799.

DEAR SIR,—We have an opportunity of sending to England, and I cannot let pass this good opportunity without thanking you for your kind remembrance in Sir William's letter. Everything goes on well here. We have got Naples, all the Forts ; and to-night our troops go to Capua. His Majesty is with us on board, were he holds his Councils and Levees every day. General Acton and Castelcicala with one gentleman of the bed-chamber attend his Majesty. Sir William and Lord Nelson with Acton are the King's Counsellers, and you may be ashured that the future government will be most just and solid. The King has bought his experience most dearly, but at last he knows his friends from his enemies, and also knows the defects of his former government, and is determined to remedy them. For he has great good sense, and his misfortunes have made him steady and look into himself.

The Queen is not come. She sent me as her Deputy, for I am very popular, speak the Neapolitan language, and [am] consider'd with Sir William, the friend of the people. The Queen is waiting at Palermo, and she is determined as there has been a great outcry against her, not to risk coming with the King; for if it had not succeeded [on] his arrival, and he not been well received, she wou'd not bear the blame, nor be in the way. We arrived before the King 14 days, and I had privately seen all the Loyal party, and having the head of the Lazerony an old friend, he came in the night of our arrival, and told me had 90 thousand Lazeronis ready at the holding up of his finger, with . . . with arms. Lord Nelson to whom I enterpreted, got a large supply of arms for the rest, and they were deposited with this man. In the mean time, the . . . were waiting in orders. The bombs were sent into St. Elmo, were returned, and the citty in confusion. I sent for Hispali, the head of the Lazeroni, and told him, in great confidence, that the king wou'd be soon at Naples, and that all we required of him was to keep the citty quiet for ten days, from that moment. We give him onely one hundred of our marine troops. These brave men kept all the town in order. And he brought the heads of all his 90 thousand round the ship on the King's arrival; and he is to have promotion. I have through him made "the Queen's party"; and the people at large have pray'd her to come back, and she is now very popular. *I send her every night a messenger to Palmero, with all the news and letters, and she gives me the same* [*way*]. I have given audiences to those of her party, and settled matters between the nobility and Her Majesty. She is not to see on her arrival any of her

former evil counselers, nor the women of fashion, alltho Ladys of the Bedchamber,—formerly her friends and companions, who did her dishonour by their desolute life.

All, all is changed. She has been very unfortunate; but she is a good woman, and has sense enough to proffit of her past unhappiness, and will make for the future *amende honorable* for the past. In short, if I can judge, it may turn out fortunate that the Neapolitans have had a dose of Republicanism.

But what a glory to our Good King, to our Country, to ourselves, that *we*—our brave fleet, our great Nelson—have had the happiness of restoring [the] King to his throne, to the Neapolitans their much loved King, and been the instrument of giving a future solid and just government to the Neapolitans.

The measures the King is taking are all to be approved of. The guilty are punish'd, and the faithful are rewarded. I have not been on shore but once. The King gave us leave to go as far as St. Elmo's to see the effect of the bombs. I saw at a distance our despoiled house, and town, and villa, that have been plundered. Sir William's new apartment,—a bomb burst in it! But it made me so low-spirited, I don't desire to go again.

We shall, as soon as the government is fixed, return to Palermo, and bring back the Royal family; for I forsee not any permanent government, till that event takes place. Nor would it be politick, after all the hospitality the King and Queen received at Palermo, to carry them off in a hurry. So, you see, there is great management required.

I am quite worn out. For I am enterpreter to Lord Nelson the King and the Queen; and altogether

feil quite shatter'd ; but, as things go well, that keeps me up. We dine now every day with the King at 12 o'clock. Dinner is over by one. His Majesty goes to sleep, and we sit down to write in this heat ; and on board you may guess what we suffer.

My mother is at Palermo. But I have an English lady with me, who is of use to me in writing, and helping to keep papers and things in order. We have given the King all the upper cabbin ; all but one room that we write in and receive the ladies who come to the King. Sir William and I have an appartment . . . in the ward-room (?) ; and as to Lord Nelson, he is here and there and everywhere. I never saw such zeal and activity in any one as in this wonderful man. My dearest Sir William, thank God ! is well, and of the greatest use now to the King. We hope Capua will fall in a few days, and then we shall be able to return to Palermo. On Sunday last, we had prayers on board. The King assisted, and was much pleased with the order, decency, and good behaviour of the men, the officers, etc. Pray write to me. God bless you, my dear Sir, and believe me,

Ever yours affectionately,
EMMA HAMILTON.

Lady Hamilton to Lord Nelson

THE LAST LETTER[1]

CANTERBURY, *October* 8, 1805.

DEAREST HUSBAND OF MY HEART,—You are all in this world to your Emma—may God send you victory

[1] This letter was returned unopened on account of Nelson's death.

and Honour [and] soon to your *Emma, Horatia and paradise Merton,* for when you are there it will be paradise. *My* own Nelson. May God prosper you and preserve you for the sake of your affectionate

EMMA.

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS (1762–1827)

SHE was born at Berwick, came to London in 1781, and began her literary career by writing verse. Seven years later she went on a visit to Paris, where she stayed during the Revolution, and strongly supported its principles. Imprisoned by Robespierre, she narrowly escaped being guillotined. Her sketches and letters deal with the condition of France during the Revolutionary period, but by critics are said to be one-sided, and therefore as a matter of history are unreliable.

To a Friend

SIGHTSEEING DURING THE REVOLUTION

[PARIS, 1790.]

We have been at all the theatres, and I am charmed with the comic actors. The tragic performers afforded me much less pleasure. Before we can admire Madame Vestris, the first tragic actress of Paris, we must have lost the impression (a thing impossible) of Mrs. Siddons's performance; who, "instead of tearing a passion to rags," like Madame Vestris, only tears the hearts of the audience with sympathy.

Most of the pieces we have seen at the French theatres have been little comedies relative to the circumstances of the times, and, on that account, preferred, in this moment of enthusiasm, to all the wit of Molière. These little pieces might perhaps read coldly enough in your

study, but have a most charming effect with an accompaniment of applause from some hundreds of the National Guards, the real actors in the scenes represented. Between the acts national songs are played, in which the whole audience join in chorus. There is one air in particular which is so universal a favourite that it is called "Le Carrillon National": the burden of the song is "Ça ira." It is sung not only at every theatre, and in every street in Paris, but in every town and village in France, by man, woman, and child. "Ça ira" is everywhere the signal of pleasure, the beloved sound which animated every bosom with delight, and of which every ear is enamoured. And I have heard the most serious political conversations end by a sportive assurance, in allusion to this song, que "Ça ira!"

Giornowiche, the celebrated player on the violin, who was so much the fashion last winter at London, I am told, sometimes amused himself at Paris by getting up into one of the trees of the Palais Royal, after it was dark, and calling forth tones from his violin, fit to "take the prisoned soul, and lap it into Elysium." He has frequently detained some thousands of people half the night in the Palais Royal, who, before they discovered the performer, used to call out in rapture, "Bravo, bravo; c'est mieux que Giornowiche."

I am just returned from seeing the Gobelin tapestry, which appears the work of magic. It gave me pleasure to see two pictures of Henry IV. In one, he is placed at supper with the miller's family; and in the other he is embracing Sully, who is brought forward on a couch, after having been wounded in battle. Nothing has afforded me more delight, since I came to France, than the honours which are paid to my favourite hero,

Henry IV., whom I prefer to all the Alexandres and Frédérics that ever existed. They may be terribly sublime, if you will, and have great claims on my admiration; but as for my love, all that portion which I bestow on heroes is already in Henry's possession.

Little statues of Henry IV. and Sully are very common. Sully is represented kneeling at the feet of this amiable prince, who holds out his hand to him; and on the base of the same are written the words which Sully records in his memoirs: "Mais levez-vous, levez-vous donc, Sully, on croiroit que je vous pardonne."

While the statue of Henry IV. on the Pont Neuf is illuminated and decorated with national ribbon, that of Louis XIV., in the Place Victoire, is stripped of its former ostentatious ornaments; the nations, which were represented enchained at his feet, having been removed since the Revolution. The figure of Fame is, however, still left hovering behind the statue of the King, with a crown of laurel in her hand, which, it is generally supposed, she is going to place upon his head.

But I have heard of a French wit who enquired whether it was really her intention to place the laurel on his Majesty's head, or whether she had just taken it off.

In our ride this morning we stopped at the Place Royale, where I was diverted by reading, on the front of a little shop under the piazzas, these words: Robelin, écrivain.—Mémoires et lettres écrites à juste prix, à la nation." I am told that Mons. Robelin is in very flourishing business; and perhaps I might have had recourse to him for assistance in my correspondence with you, if I did not leave Paris to-morrow. You shall hear from me from Rouen.

Helen Maria Williams to a Friend

A VISIT TO THE BASTILLE

[1790.]

Before I suffered my friends at Paris to conduct me through the usual routine of convents, churches, and palaces, I requested to visit the Bastille, feeling a much stronger desire to contemplate the ruins of that building than the most perfect edifices of Paris. When we got into the carriage, our French servant called to the coachman, with an air of triumph, "À la Bastille—mais nous n'y resterons pas." We drove under that porch which so many wretches have entered never to repass, and, alighting from the carriage, descended with difficulty into the dungeons, which were too low to admit of our standing upright, and so dark that we were obliged at noon-day to visit them with the light of a candle. We saw the hooks of those chains by which the prisoners were fastened round the neck to the walls of their cells; many of which, being below the level of the water, are in a constant state of humidity; and a noxious vapour issued from them, which more than once extinguished the candle, and was so insufferable that it required a strong spirit of curiosity to tempt one to linger. Good God!—and to these regions of horror were human creatures dragged at the caprice of despotic power. What a melancholy consideration that

> Man! proud man,
> Drest in a little brief authority,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As makes the angels weep.

There appears to be a greater number of these dungeons

than one could have imagined the hard heart of tyranny itself would contrive; for, since the destruction of the building, many subterraneous cells have been discovered underneath a piece of ground which was inclosed within the walls of the Bastille, but which seemed a bank of solid earth before the horrid secrets of this prison-house were disclosed. Some skeletons were found in these recesses, with irons still fastened on their decaying bones.

After having visited the Bastille, we may indeed be surprised that a nation so enlightened as the French submitted so long to the oppressions of their Government; but we must cease to wonder that their indignant spirits at length shook off the galling yoke.

Those who have contemplated the dungeons of the Bastille, without rejoicing in the French Revolution, may, for aught I know, be very agreeable persons, and very agreeable companions in the hours of prosperity; but if my heart were sinking with anguish I should not fly to those persons for consolation. Sterne says that a man is incapable of loving one woman as he ought who has not a sort of an affection for the whole sex; and as little should I look for particular sympathy from those who have no feelings of general philanthropy. If the splendour of a despotic throne can only shine like the radiance of lightning while all around is involved in gloom and horror, in the name of Heaven let its baleful lustre be extinguished for ever. May no such strong contrast of light and shade again exist in this political system of France! but may the beams of liberty, like the beams of day, shed their benign influence on the cottage of the peasant as well as on the palace of the monarch! May liberty, which for

so many ages past has taken pleasure in softening the evils of the bleak and rugged climates of the north, in fertilising a barren soil, in clearing the swamp, in lifting mounds against the inundations of the tempest, diffuse her blessings also on the genial land of France and bid the husbandman rejoice under the shade of the olive and the vine.

The Bastille, which Henry IV. and his veteran troops assailed in vain, the citizens of Paris had the glory of taking in a few hours. The advance of Mons. de Launay had tempted him to guard this fortress with only half the complement of men ordered by Government; and a letter which he received the morning of the 14th of July, commanding him to sustain the siege till the evening, when succour would arrive, joined to his own treachery towards the assailants, cost him his life.

The courage of the besiegers was inflamed by the horrors of famine, there being at this time only twenty-four hours' provision of bread in Paris. For some days the people had assembled in crowds round the shops of the bakers, who were obliged to have a guard of soldiers to protect them from the famished multitude; while the women, rendered furious by want, cried, in the resolute tone of despair, "Il nous faut du pain pour nos enfans." Such was the scarcity of bread, that a French gentleman told me that the day preceding the taking of the Bastille he was invited to dine with a Negotiant, and, when he went, was informed that a servant had been out five hours in search of bread, and had at last been able to purchase only one loaf.

It was at this crisis, it was to save themselves the shocking spectacle of their wives and infants perishing

before their eyes, that the citizens of Paris flew to arms, and, impelled by such causes, fought with the daring intrepidity of men who had all that renders life of any value at stake, and who determined to die or conquer. The women, too, far from indulging the fears incident to our feeble sex, in defiance of the cannon of the Bastille, ventured to bring victuals to their sons and husbands ; and with a spirit worthy of Roman matrons, encouraged them to go on. Women mounted guard in the streets, and when any person passed, called out boldly, " Qui va là ? "

A gentleman, who had the command of fifty men in this enterprise, told me that one of his soldiers being killed by a cannon-ball, the people, with great marks of indignation, removed the corpse, and then, snatching up the dead man's hat, begged money of the bystanders for his interment, in a manner characteristic enough of that gaiety which never forsakes the French, even on such occasions as would make any other people on earth furious. " Madame, pour ce pauvre diable qui se fait tué pour la Nation !—Mons. pour ce pauvre chien qui se fait tué pour la Nation ! " This mode of supplication, though not very pathetic, obtained the end desired ; no person being sufficiently obdurate to resist the powerful plea, " qu'il se fait tué pour la Nation."

When the Bastille was taken, and the old man, of whom you have no doubt heard, and who had been confined in a dungeon thirty-five years, was brought into daylight, which had not for so long a space of time visited his eyes, he staggered, shook his white beard, and cried faintly, " Gentlemen, you have rendered me one great service ; render me another, kill

me ! for I know not where to go." "Come along, come along," the crowd answered with one voice, "the Nation will provide for you."

As the heroes of the Bastille passed along the streets after its surrender, the citizens stood at the doors of their houses, loaded with wine, brandy, and other refreshments, which they offered to these deliverers of their country. But they unanimously refused to take any strong liquors, considering the great work they had undertaken as yet not accomplished, and being determined to watch the whole night in case of any surprise.

All those who had assisted in taking the Bastille were presented by the municipality of Paris with a ribbon of the national colours, on which is stamped, inclosed in a circle of brass, an impression of the Bastille, and which is worn as a military order.

The municipality of Paris also proposed a solemn funeral procession in memory of those who lost their lives in this enterprise ; but, on making application to the National Assembly for a deputation of its members to assist at this solemnity, the Assembly were of opinion that these funeral honours should be postponed till a more favourable moment, as they might at present have a tendency to inflame the minds of the people.

I have heard several persons mention a young man, of a little, insignificant figure, who, the day before the Bastille was taken, got up on a chair in the Palais Royal, and harangued the multitude, conjuring them to make a struggle for their liberty, and asserting that now the moment was arrived.

They listened to his eloquence with the most eager attention ; and, when he had instructed as many as

could hear him at one time, he requested them to depart, and repeated his harangue to a new set of auditors.

Among the dungeons of the Bastille are placed, upon a heap of stones, the figures of the two men who contrived the plan of this fortress, where they were afterwards confined for life. These men are represented chained to the wall, and are beheld without any emotion of sympathy.

The person employed to remove the ruins of the Bastille has framed of the stones eighty-three complete models of this building, which, with a true patriotic spirit, he has presented to the eighty-three departments of the kingdom, by way of hint to his countrymen to take care of their liberties in future.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (Godwin) (1759–1797)

was born at Hoxton. From her childhood her home was an unhappy one, her father being a spendthrift and a drunkard. At nineteen she earned her living as a governess; but some years later became literary adviser to J. Johnson, the publisher. She lived in Paris during the "Terror," and wrote a history of the Revolution. She was practically the pioneer of "Women's Rights," her best-known work being the "Vindication of the Rights of Women." In 1797 Mary Wollstonecraft married William Godwin, and died at the birth of her daughter Mary, who afterwards became the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

To J. Johnson

THE LAST JOURNEY OF LOUIS XVI.

PARIS, *December* 26, 1792.

I should immediately on the receipt of your letter, my dear friend, have thanked you for your punctuality,

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT

From a photo by Emery Walker, after the picture by Opie (probably painted in April 1797) in the National Portrait Gallery.

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for it highly gratified me, had I not wished to wait till I could tell you that this day was not stained with blood. Indeed the prudent precautions taken by the National Convention to prevent a tumult made me suppose that the dogs of faction would not dare to bark, much less to bite, however true to their scent, and I was not mistaken; for the citizens, who were all called out, are returning home with composed countenances, shouldering their arms. About nine o'clock this morning the king passed by my window, moving silently along (excepting now and then a few strokes on the drum, which rendered the stillness more awful) through empty streets, surrounded by the National Guards, who, clustering round the carriage, seemed to deserve their name. The inhabitants flocked to their windows, but the casements were all shut, not a voice was heard, nor did I see anything like an insulting gesture. For the first time since I entered France, I bowed to the majesty of the people, and respected the propriety of behaviour so perfectly in unison with my own feelings. I can scarcely tell you why, but an association of ideas made the tears flow insensibly from my eyes, when I saw Louis sitting, with more dignity than I expected from his character, in a hackney coach, going to meet death, where so many of his race have triumphed. My fancy instantly brought Louis XIV. before me, entering the capital with all his pomp, after one of the victories most flattering to his pride, only to see the sunshine of his prosperity overshadowed by the sublime gloom of misery. I have been alone ever since; and though my mind is calm, I cannot dismiss the lively images that have filled my imagination all the day. Nay, do not smile, but pity me; for, once or twice, lifting

my eyes from the paper, I have seen eyes glare through a glass door opposite my chair, and bloody hands shook at me. Not the distant sound of a footstep can I hear. My apartments are remote from those of the servants, the only persons who sleep with me in an immense hotel, one folding door opening after another. I wish I had even kept the cat with me! I want to see something alive; death in so many frightful shapes has taken hold of my fancy. I am going to bed, and for the first time in my life I cannot put out the candle.

M. W.

Mary Wollstonecraft to Gilbert Imlay

ABSENCE

PARIS, 1793, *Friday Morning.*

I am glad to find that other people can be unreasonable as well as myself; for be it known to thee that I answered thy *first* letter the very night it reached me (Sunday), though thou couldst not receive it before Wednesday, because it was not sent off till the next day. There is a full, true, and particular account.

Yet I am not angry with thee, my love, for I think that it is a proof of stupidity, and likewise of a milk-and-water affection, which comes to the same thing when the temper is governed by a square and compass. There is nothing picturesque in this straight-lined equality, and the passions always give grace to the actions.

Recollection now makes my heart bound to thee; but it is not to thy money-getting face, though I cannot be seriously displeased with the exertion which increases

my esteem, or rather is what I should have expected from thy character. No; I have thy honest countenance before me—relaxed by tenderness; a little—little wounded by my whims; and thy eyes glittering with sympathy. Thy lips then feel softer than soft, and I rest my cheek on thine, forgetting all the world. I have not left the hue of love out of the picture—the rosy glow; and fancy has spread it over my own cheeks, I believe, for I feel them burning, whilst a delicious tear trembles in my eye that would be all your own, if a grateful emotion directed to the Father of nature, who has made me thus alive to happiness, did not give more warmth to the sentiment it divides. I must pause a moment.

Need I tell you that I am tranquil after writing thus? I do not know why, but I have more confidence in your affection, when absent, than present; nay, I think that you must love me, for, in the sincerity of my heart let me say it, I believe I deserve your tenderness, because I am true, and have a degree of sensibility that you can see and relish.

Yours sincerely,

MARY.

Mary Wollstonecraft to Gilbert Imlay

LITTLE FANNY

PARIS, *January* 15, 1795.

. . . My animal is well; I have not yet taught her to eat, but nature is doing the business. I gave her a crust to assist the cutting of her teeth; and now she has two she makes good use of them to gnaw a crust, biscuit, etc. You would laugh to see her; she

is just like a little squirrel; she will guard a crust for two hours, and, after fixing her eyes on an object for some time, dart on it with an aim as sure as a bird of prey—nothing can equal her life and spirits. I suffer from a cold, but it does not affect her. Adieu. Do not forget to love us—and come soon to tell us that you do.

MARY.

Mary Wollstonecraft to William Godwin

April 20, 1797.

. . . Fanny is delighted with the thought of dining with you. But I wish you to eat your meat first, and let her come up with the pudding. I shall probably knock at your door in my way to Opie's; but should I not find you, let me request you not to be too late this evening. Do not give Fanny butter with her pudding.

Mary Wollstonecraft to Gilbert Imlay

IMPRESSIONS OF NORWAY

TONSBERG, NORWAY, 1795.

I left East Russia the day before yesterday. The weather was very fine; but so calm that we loitered on the water near fourteen hours, only to make about six-and-twenty miles.

It seemed to me a sort of emancipation when we landed at Helzeraac. The confinement which everywhere struck me whilst sojourning amongst the rocks made me hail the earth as a land of promise; and the

situation shone with fresh lustre from the contrast—from appearing to be a free abode. Here it was possible to travel by land—I never thought this a comfort before, and my eyes, fatigued by the sparkling of the sun on the water, now contentedly reposed on the green expanse, half-persuaded that such verdant mead had never till then regaled them.

I rose early to pursue my journey to Tonsberg. The country still wore a face of joy—and my soul was alive to its charms. Leaving the most lofty and romantic of the cliffs behind us, we were almost continually descending to Tonsberg, through Elysian scenes; for not only the sea, but mountains, rivers, lakes, and groves, gave an almost endless variety to the prospect. The cottagers were still carrying home the hay; and the cottages on this road looked very comfortable. Peace and plenty—I mean not abundance—seemed to reign around; still I grew sad as I drew near my old abode. I was sorry to see the sun so high; it was broad noon. Tonsberg was something like a home, yet I was to enter without lighting up pleasure in any eye. I dreaded the solitariness of my apartment, and wished for night to hide the starting tears, or to shed them on my pillow, and close my eyes on a world where I was destined to wander alone. Why has nature so many charms for me—calling forth and cherishing refined sentiments, only to wound the breast that fosters them? How illusive, perhaps the most so, are the plans of happiness founded on virtue and principle; what inlets of misery do they not open in a half-civilised society? The satisfaction arising from conscious rectitude will not calm an injured heart, when tenderness is ever finding excuses; and

self-applause is a cold, solitary feeling, that cannot supply the place of disappointed affection, without throwing a gloom over every prospect, which, banishing pleasure, does not preclude pain. I reasoned and reasoned; but my heart was too full to allow me to remain in the house, and I walked, till I was wearied out, to purchase rest—or rather forgetfulness.

Employment has beguiled this day, and to-morrow I set out for Moss, in my way to Stromstad. At Gothenburg I shall embrace my *Fannikin*;[1] probably she will not know me again—and I shall be hurt if she do not. How childish is this! still it is a natural feeling. I would not permit myself to indulge the "thick-coming tears" of fondness whilst I was detained by business. Yet I never saw a calf bounding in a meadow that did not remind me of my little frolicker. A calf? you say. Yes; but a *capital* one, I own.

I cannot write composedly—I am every instant sinking into reveries—my heart flutters, I know not why. Fool! It is time thou wert at rest.

Friendship and domestic happiness are continually praised; yet how little is there of either in the world, because it requires more cultivation of mind to keep awake affection, even in our own hearts, than the common run of people suppose. Besides, few like to be seen as they really are; and a degree of simplicity, and of undisguised confidence, which to uninterested observers would almost border on weakness, is the charm, nay, the essence of love or friendship: all the bewitching graces of childhood again appearing. As objects merely to exercise my taste, I therefore like to see people together who have an affection for each

[1] Her little girl Fanny.

other; every turn of their features touches me, and remains pictured on my imagination in indelible characters. The zest of novelty is, however, necessary to rouse the languid sympathies which have been hackneyed in the world; as is the factitious behaviour, falsely termed good-breeding, to amuse those who, defective in taste, continually rely for pleasure on their animal spirits, which, not being maintained by the imagination, are unavoidably sooner exhausted than the sentiments of the heart. Friendship is in general sincere at the commencement, and lasts whilst there is anything to support it; but as a mixture of novelty and vanity is the usual prop, no wonder if it fall with the slender stay. The fop in the play payed a greater compliment than he was aware of when he said to a person whom he meant to flatter, "I like you almost as well as a *new* "*acquaintance*." Why am I talking of friendship, after which I have had such a wild-goose chase? I thought only of telling you that the crows, as well as wild geese, are here birds of passage.

SARAH SIDDONS (1755 1831)

THE eldest child of an actor, Roger Kemble; she married William Siddons, also an actor. Her first appearance at Drury Lane was at the invitation of David Garrick, but being unsuccessful, she returned to the provinces, where she remained for some years. Later she became the foremost actress of the day—tragedy being her *forte*. Nature endowed her with beauty as well as genius and a voice of great power and sympathy. At her death a statue, the first erected to a woman in London (other than royalty), was set up in Paddington Churchyard.

To John Taylor

ON HIS OFFER TO BE HER BIOGRAPHER

NEWNHAM RECTORY, *August* 5, 1793.

Indeed, my dear friend, if you were to write my praises with the pen of men and angels, I should shrink from that celebrity which the partiality of so kind a biographer would confer; for how could I read without blushes those accounts of myself, which would be measures of his friendship, not standards of my worthiness? I am content that you should deceive yourself about my talents and my character, because I have an interest, and perhaps a livelier interest than most people, I believe, imagine, for the opinion of those who give themselves the trouble to think of me at all. But my friends in general are very much mistaken in my character. It has pleased God to place me in a situation of great publicity, but my natural disposition inclines me to privacy and retirement; and, though the applause that is the Palm of Art is necessarily sweet to my sense, yet sweeter is the still small voice of tender relatives and estimable friends. You may therefore tell me as much as you please of those talents with which you say I am so miraculously gifted, and I will hear you with pleasure, and pray for continuance of your illusion. But do not—*I conjure you*, at least till opinion has a little more sanctioned the idea—do not bid all the world gaze, and wonder, *and certainly laugh* at my yet feeble efforts.

I am very much obliged to Mrs. Robinson for her polite attention in sending me her poems. Pray tell her so with my compliments. I hope the poor, charming woman has quite recovered from her fall. If she is half

as amiable as her writings, I shall long for *the possibility* of being acquainted with her. I say the possibility, because one's whole life is one continued sacrifice of inclinations, which, to indulge, however laudable or innocent, would draw down the malice and reproach of those prudent people who never do ill, "but feed, and sleep, and do observances, to the stale ritual of quaint ceremony." The charming and beautiful Mrs. Robinson! I pity her from the bottom of my soul!

Pray go and take Betsy to Marlborough Street, to see my bust of my little son George. I could have done it better, but for the extreme heat of the weather, which made the clay crack and dry too fast. Adieu.

Your affec. friend,
S. SIDDONS.

Mrs. Siddons to Mrs. Fitzhugh

READINGS AT WINDSOR CASTLE

WESTBOURNE, *January* 26, 1813.

I have been these three days meditating about writing you an account of my Windsor visit, which you have, no doubt, seen mentioned in the newspapers; but, whether occasioned by the fatigue of that visit, or from an habitual tendency, my head has been more heavy and painful since my return home than it has been for many months; but though very far from well at present, I cannot resist the pleasure of telling you myself what I know you will be gratified to hear.—Take it thus and verbatim.

On the 18th (I think it was) I was in the middle of dressing to go and dine with Mrs. Damer, when an

especial messenger arrived in the dusk, with a letter from my old friend the Dowager Lady Stewart, to tell me that the Queen had ordered her to write and say "that her Majesty wished very much to hear me read, and desired to have an answer returned immediately to Carlton House, where the party from Windsor dined that day," which was Wednesday. I of course wrote that I should be happy to have the honour of obeying the Queen's commands, and therefore left my own house on Friday, according to appointment, and went to Frogmore, where I was informed that everything would be prepared for my arrival. I got there about three, and was conducted into a very elegant drawing-room, where I sat till it was time to go to the Castle and consult with Lady Stewart respecting the reading. I spent about an hour very agreeably in her apartment with herself and Princess Elizabeth, who appears the best natured person in the world. We concluded for some part of *Henry VIII.*, some part of *The Merchant of Venice*, and to finish with some scenes from *Hamlet*. After this I dined with Madame Bechendoft, her Majesty's confidential gentlewoman. When Lady Harcourt returned, after dining with the Queen, I again went to her apartment, where Princess Elizabeth renewed her visit, and staid and chatted very charmingly, of course, because her conversation was chiefly about the pleasure they had all formerly received from my exertions, and the delight of hearing me again. We then parted for the night, the ladies to the Queen's card-party, and I to Frogmore, where the steward and housekeeper came to me to say that her Majesty and the Princess had been there in the morning, and had left a message, to desire that I would consider myself as in my own house, with

repeated injunctions to make my residence there as agreeable as possible. The next day the whole Royal party from Windsor, with Princess Charlotte and the Dukes of Cambridge and Clarence, dined at Frogmore. Many of the nobility and gentry were invited to the reading; and at about half-past eight I entered the room where they were all assembled. The Queen, the Princesses, and the Duchess of York, all came to me, and conversed most graciously, till the Queen took her place. Then the company seated themselves, and I began. It all went off to my heart's content, for the room was the finest place for the voice in the world. I retired sometimes, at her Majesty's request, to rest; and when it was over I had the extreme satisfaction to find that they had all been extremely delighted. Lady Stewart wrote to me yesterday that I am still the inexhaustible fund of conversation and eulogium. When the Queen retired, after the reading, Lady Stewart brought to me a magnificent gold chain, with a cross of many coloured jewels, from her Majesty, and hung it round my neck before all the company. This was a great surprise, and you may imagine how so great an honour affected me. You may conceive, too, the pleasure it gave me to be able to divert a few of those mournfully monotonous hours which these amiable sufferers, from the singularly afflicting nature of their misfortune, are doomed to undergo. I found that the Queen had been desirous that I should not return the next day, but stay and read again to her at the Castle next night, which I was too happy to do. This reading consisted of passages from "Paradise Lost," "Gray's Elegy," and "Marmion." When I went into the room I found her Majesty, with all the Princesses, and the Princess Charlotte, seated,

and a table and chair prepared for me, which she (most graciously saying she was sure I must still feel fatigued from the last night's exertion) ordered me to seat myself in, when I thanked her for the magnificent favour I had received, and hoped the reading of the preceding night had not fatigued her Majesty, for she really had a terrible cough and cold. She hoped that the keepsake would remind me of Frogmore, and said "that it was impossible to be fatigued when she was so extremely delighted." I then took my leave, intending to return home the next day, which was Monday, but, having long meditated a short visit to Lord and Lady Harcourt, who live at St. Leonard's Hill, about four miles from Frogmore, I called there, and Lady Harcourt persuaded me to remain with her, and was so good as to make me send for Cecilia and Miss Wilkinson. While I was there I received another command from her Majesty; and the next Sunday evening I read *Othello* to the Royal party at the Castle; and here my story ends. I have much to say if I had eyes and head; my heart, however, is still strong, and I am, with undiminished affection,

Yours,

S. S.

MARIA EDGEWORTH (1767–1849)

A DAUGHTER of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, a member of an old Irish family settled at Edgeworthstown, co. Longford. Miss Edgeworth began to write at an early age, and in all published over twenty volumes. She was devoted to her father, who greatly assisted her in her literary work. During her lifetime she enjoyed a great reputation, being fêted in London and Paris. In her old age she learned Spanish and

delighted in reading history. Miss Edgeworth wrote a very popular series of stories for children and some novels, of which "Castle Rackrent," "The Absentee," and "Ormond" are still remembered.

To Miss Beaufort[1]

A LETTER OF CONGRATULATION

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *May* 16, 1798.

Whilst you, my dear Miss Beaufort, have been toiling in Dublin, my father has been delighting himself in preparations for June. The little boudoir looks as if it intends to be pretty. This is the only room in the house which my father will allow to be finished, as he wishes that your taste should finish the rest. Like the man who begged to have the eclipse put off, we have been here praying to have the spring put off, as this place never looks so pretty as when the lilacs and laburnums are in full flower. I fear, notwithstanding all our prayers, that their purple and yellow honours will be gone before your arrival. There is one other flower which I am sure will not be in blow for you, "a little western flower called love in idleness." Amongst the many kindnesses my father has shown me, the greatest, I think, has been his permitting me to see his heart *à découverte*; and I have seen, by your kind sincerity and his, that in good and cultivated minds love is no *idle* passion, but one that inspires useful and

[1] Written on the occasion of her father's fourth marriage. This, and the following letters of Maria Edgeworth, are printed by the kind permission of Mrs. Butler, Mr. A. E. Edgeworth, and Professor Edgeworth, the only surviving niece and nephews of Miss Edgeworth.

generous energy. I have been convinced by your example of what I was always inclined to believe, that the power of feeling affection is increased by the cultivation of the understanding. The wife of our Indian yogii (if a yogii be permitted to have a wife) might be a very affectionate woman, but her sympathy with her husband could not have a very extensive sphere. As his eyes are to be continually fixed upon the point of his nose, hers, in duteous sympathy, must squint in like manner; and if the perfection of his virtue be to sit so still that the birds (*vide* Sacontala) may unmolested build nests in his hair, his wife cannot better show her affection than by yielding her tresses to them with similar patient stupidity. Are there not European yogiis, or men whose ideas do not go much further than *le bout du nez*? And how delightful it must be to be chained for better for worse to one of this species! I should guess—for I know nothing of the matter—that the courtship of an ignorant lover must be almost as insipid as a marriage with him; for "my jewel" continually repeated, without new setting, must surely fatigue a little.

You call yourself, dear Miss Beaufort, my friend and companion: I hope you will never have reason to repent beginning in this style towards me. I think you will not find me encroach upon you. The overflowings of your kindness, if I know anything of my own heart, will fertilise the land, but will not destroy the landmarks. I do not know whether I most hate or despise the temper which will take an ell where an inch is given. A well-bred person never forgets that species of respect which is due to situation and rank. Though his superiors in rank treat him with the utmost condescension, he never

is "Hail fellow well met" with them: he never calls them Jack or Tom by way of increasing his own consequence.

I flatter myself that you will find me gratefully exact, *en belle fille*. I think there is a great deal of difference between that species of ceremony which exists with acquaintance, and that which should always exist with the best of friends: the one prevents the growth of affection, the other preserves it in youth and age. Many foolish people make fine plantations, and forget to fence them; so the young trees are destroyed by the young cattle, and the bark of the forest trees is sometimes injured. You need not, dear Miss Beaufort, fence yourself round with very strong palings in this family, where all have been early accustomed to mind their boundaries. As for me, you see my intentions, or at least my theories, are good enough; if my practice be but half as good, you will be content, will you not? But Theory was born in Brobdingnag, and Practice in Lilliput. So much the better for *me*. I have often considered, since my return home, as I have seen all this family pursuing their several occupations and amusements, how much you will have it in your power to add to their happiness. In a stupid or indolent family your knowledge and talents would be thrown away; here, if it may be said without vanity, they will be the certain source of your daily happiness. You will come into a new family, but you will not come as a stranger, dear Miss Beaufort; you will not lead a new life, but only continue to lead the life you have been used to in your own happy, cultivated family.

Maria Edgeworth to Mrs. Mary Sneyd

PARIS, *January* 10, 1803.

Siècle réparateur, as Monge has christened this century.

CELEBRITIES AT PARIS

MY DEAR AUNT MARY,—I will give you a journal of yesterday. I know you love journals. Got up and put on our shoes and stockings and cambric muslin gowns, which are in high esteem here, fur-tippets, and *fur-clogs*, —God bless Aunt Mary and Aunt Charlotte for them— and were in coach by nine o'clock; drove to the excellent Abbé Morellet's, where we were invited to breakfast to meet Madame d'Ouditot, the lady who inspired Rousseau with the idea of Julie. Julie is now seventy-two years of age, a thin woman in a little black bonnet: she appeared to me shockingly ugly; she squints so much that it is impossible to tell which way she is looking; but no sooner did I hear her speak than I began to like her, and no sooner was I seated beside her than I began to find in her countenance a most benevolent and agreeable expression. She entered into conversation immediately: her manner invited and could not fail to obtain confidence. She seems as gay and open-hearted as a girl of fifteen. It has been said of her that she not only never did any harm, but never suspected any. She is possessed of that art which Lord Kames said he would prefer to the finest gift from the queen of the fairies—the art of seizing the best side of every object. She has had great misfortunes, but she has still retained the power of making herself and her friends happy.

Even during the horrors of the Revolution, if she met with a flower, a butterfly, an agreeable smell, a

pretty colour, she would turn her attention to these, and for the moment suspend her sense of misery, not from frivolity, but from real philosophy. No one has exerted themselves with more energy in the service of her friends. I felt in her company the delightful influence of a cheerful temper, and soft, attractive manners—enthusiasm which age cannot extinguish, and which spends, but does not waste itself on small but not trifling objects. I wish I could at seventy-two be such a woman! She told me that Rousseau, whilst he was writing so finely on education, and leaving his own children in the Foundling Hospital, defended himself with so much eloquence that even those who blamed him in their hearts could not find tongues to answer him. Once at dinner at Madame d'Ouditot's, there was a fine pyramid of fruit. Rousseau, in helping himself, took the peach which formed the base of the pyramid, and the rest fell immediately. "Rousseau," said she, "that is what you always do with all our systems: you pull down with a single touch; but who will build up what you pull down?" I asked if he was grateful for all the kindness shown to him. "No," he was ungrateful; he had a thousand bad qualities, but I turned my attention from them to his genius and the good he had done mankind.

After our excellent breakfast, including tea, chocolate, coffee, buttered and unbuttered cakes, good conversation, and good humour, came M. Cheron, husband of the Abbé Morellet's niece, who is translating "Early Lessons,"[1] French on one side and English on the other. Didot has undertaken to publish the "Rational Primer,"

[1] "Early Lessons" and the "Rational Primer" are two of Miss Edgeworth's books.

which is much approved of here for teaching the true English pronunciation.

Then we went to a lecture on Shorthand, or Passigraphy, and there we met Mr. Chenevix, who came home to dine with us, and stayed till nine, talking of Montgolfier's *bélier* for throwing water to a great height. We have seen it and its inventor: something like Mr. Watt in manner, not equal to him in genius. He had received from M. de la Poype a letter my father wrote some years ago, about the method of guiding balloons, and as far as he could judge, he thought it might succeed.

We went, with Madame Récamier and the Russian Princess Dalgowski, to La Harpe's house, to hear him repeat some of his own verses. He lives in a wretched house, and we went up dirty stairs, through dirty passages, where I wondered how fine ladies' trains and noses could go, and were received in a dark, small den by the philosopher, or rather dévot, for he spurns the name of philosopher. He was in a dirty reddish nightgown, and very dirty nightcap bound round the forehead with a superlatively dirty chocolate-coloured ribbon. Madame Récamier, the beautiful, the elegant, robed in white satin, trimmed with white fur, seated herself on the elbow of his armchair, and besought him to repeat his verses. Charlotte has drawn a picture of this scene. We met at La Harpe's, Lady Elizabeth Chester and Lady Bessborough: very engaging manners.

We were a few days ago at a bal d'enfants; this you would translate a children's ball, and so did we, till we were set right by the learned—not a single child was at this ball, and only half a dozen unmarried ladies: it is a ball given by mothers to their grown-up children. Charlotte appeared as usual to great advan-

tage, and was much admired for her ease and unaffected manners. She danced one English country dance with M. de Crillon, son of the Gibraltar Duke: when she stood up, a gentleman came to me and exclaimed, "Ah, Mademoiselle, votre sœur va danser, nous attendons le moment où elle va *paraître*." She appeared extremely well from not being anxious to appear at all. To-day we stayed at home to gain time for letters, etc., but thirteen visitors, besides the washerwoman, prevented our accomplishing all our great and good purposes. The visitors were all, except the washerwoman, so agreeable, that even while they interrupted us we did not know how to wish them gone.

Maria Edgeworth to Lucy Edgeworth

THE BAILLIES' CAT

MISS BAILLIE'S, HAMPSTEAD, *January* 12, 1822.

I have been four days resolving to get up half an hour earlier that I might have time to tell you, my dear Lucy, the history of a cat of Joanna and Agnes Baillie's.

You may, perhaps, have heard the name of a celebrated Mr. Brodie, who wrote on Poisons, and whose papers on this subject are to be found in the *Transactions of the Royal Society*, and reviewed in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1811. He brought some of the Woorara poison, with which the natives poison their arrows and destroy their victims. It was his theory that this poison destroys by affecting the nervous system only, and that after a certain time its effects on the nerves would cease, as the effects of intoxicating liquors cease, and that the patient might recover, if the lungs

could be kept in play, if respiration were not suspended during the trance or partial death in which the patient lies. To prove the truth of this by experiment, he fell to work on a cat; he pricked the cat with the point of a lance dipped in Woorara. It was some minutes before the animal became convulsed, and then it lay, to all appearance, dead. Mr. Brodie applied a tube to its mouth, and blew air into it from time to time. After lying some hours apparently lifeless, it recovered, shook itself, and went about its own affairs as usual. This was tried several times, much to the satisfaction of the philosophical spectators, but not quite to the satisfaction of poor Puss, who grew very thin, and looked so wretched that Dr. Baillie's son, then a boy, took compassion on this poor subject of experiment, and begged Mr. Brodie would let him carry off the cat. With or without consent, he did carry her off, and brought her to his aunts, Joanna and Agnes Baillie. Then puss's prosperous days began. Agnes made a soft bed for her in her own room, and by night and day she was the happiest of cats; she was called Woorara, which in time shortened into Woory. I wish I could wind up Woory's history by assuring you that she was the most attached and grateful of cats, but truth forbids. A few weeks after her arrival at Hampstead, she marched off and never was heard of more. It is supposed that she took to evil courses; tasted the blood and bones of her neighbour's chickens, and fell at last a sacrifice to the vengeance of a cookmaid.

After this cat's departure Agnes took to heart a kitten, who was very fond of her. This kitten, the first night she slept in her room, on wakening in the

morning looked up from the hearth at Agnes, who was lying awake, but with her eyes half-shut, and marked all pussy's motions; after looking some instants, puss jumped up on the bed, crept softly forward and put her paw, with its glove on, upon one of Miss Baillie's eyelids and pushed it gently up. Miss Baillie looked at her fixedly, and puss, as if satisfied that her eyes were *there* and safe, went back to her station on the hearth and never troubled herself more about the matter.

To finish this chapter on cats. I saw yesterday at a lady's house at Hampstead, a real Persian cat, brought over by a Navy captain, her brother. It has long hair like a dog, and a tail like a terrier's, only with longer hair. It is the most gentle, depressed-looking creature I ever saw; it seems to have the *mal du pays*, and, moreover, had the cholic the morning I saw it, and Agnes Baillie had a spoonful of castor-oil poured out for it, but it ran away. . .

Maria Edgeworth to Mrs. Ruxton

MRS. SIDDONS'S REMINISCENCES

8, HOLLES STREET, *April* 10, 1822.

. . . Through Lydia White we have become more acquainted with Mrs. Siddons than I ever expected to be. She gave us the history of her first acting of *Lady Macbeth*, and of her resolving, in the sleep scene, to lay down the candlestick, contrary to the precedent of Mrs. Pritchard and all the traditions, before she began to wash her hands and say, "Out, vile spot!" Sheridan knocked violently at her door during the five minutes she had desired to have entirely to herself,

to compose her spirits before the play began. He burst in and prophesied that she would ruin herself for ever if she persevered in this resolution *to lay down the candlestick*. She persisted, however, in her determination, succeeded, was applauded, and Sheridan begged her pardon. She described well the awe she felt, and the power of the excitement given to her by the sight of Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and Sir Joshua Reynolds in the pit. She invited us to a private reading-party at her own house; present only her daughter, a very pretty young lady, a Mrs. Wilkinson, Mr. Burney, Dr. Holland, Lydia White, Mr. Harness and ourselves. She read one of her finest parts, and that best suited to a private room—Queen Katherine. She was dressed so as to do well for the two parts she was to perform this night—of gentlewoman and queen—black velvet, with black-velvet cap and feathers. She sat the whole time, and with a large Shakespeare before her; as she knew the part of Katherine by heart, she seldom required the help of glasses, and she recited it incomparably well: the changes of her countenance were striking. From her first burst of indignation when she objects to the Cardinal as her judge, to her last expiring scene, was all so perfectly natural and so touching, we could give no applause but tears. Mrs. Siddons is beautiful even at this moment. Some who had seen her on the stage in this part, assured me that it had a much greater effect upon them in a private room, because they were near enough to see the changes of her countenance, and to hear the pathos of her half-suppressed voice. Some one said that in the dying scene her very pillow seemed sick.

She spoke afterwards of the different parts which

she had liked and disliked to act; and when she mentioned the characters and scenes she had found easy or difficult, it was curious to observe that the feelings of the actress and the sentiments and reasons of the best critics meet. Whatever was not natural, or inconsistent with the main part of the character, she found she never could act well. . .

HARRIET, LADY HESKETH (1733–1807)

WAS the wife of Thomas Hesketh, who was created a baronet in 1761. Lady Hesketh was one of the chief correspondents and friends of her cousin, William Cowper, the poet.

To Rev. John Johnson[1]

WILLIAM COWPER

WESTON, *July* 17, 1794.

Though this cannot go till to-morrow, I yet cannot help writing this evening to tell you, my good Johnny, how truly glad I am to think that in the space of a few days you will *really* be here to share in my *ineffectual* labours for the good of our unhappy cousin.[2] You may easily believe the Task sustained by me, and *me* alone has been a severe one, it has, indeed, and tho' I confess I do not feel it with the same acuteness that I did during the first three months (for then, I think, I must have dyed) yet 'tis certain my sufferings

[1] This, and the three following letters are reprinted from the "Letters of Lady Hesketh to the Rev. John Johnson," by kind permission of the Editor, Mrs. Catherine Bodham Johnson, and to Messrs. Jarrold & Sons, the publishers.

[2] William Cowper.

have not been *small* who have sustained the weight of this affliction *alone* more than four months out of the seven that our dear Cousin has laboured under this cruel calamity! but you will come certainly, my good Johnny, and I shall have at least the comfort of consulting you and hearing your opinion on many things relative to this unhappy Man, which at present distress me not a little. I wish, too, for your opinion of him, for as it is so long since you saw him, you will be enabled better to judge of the alteration there may be in him than I can do, who see him every day. That you will think him much thinner than when you left him I conclude, but his face looks better than it did. Indeed I want sadly to know what you really think of him? He continues dreadfully *low*, to be sure, and the terrors of being carried away and being torn in pieces seem to agitate him as much as ever; but there is one favourable symptom certainly, that is that he evidently attends to me when I *read*, and is even desirous I should, as he has asked me more than once if I expect books from Hookham, and he never, unless he could help it, leaves the room when I am reading. This is doubtless an alteration for the better, as it used to seem to hurt him very much, and I really left it off for some time on his account, as he would sometimes go out of the room quite in a rage! a thing you'll allow very uncommon *for him*, and is a great comfort this change has taken place, for it pleases the Enchantress [1] very much to be read to, and is far less laborious and fatiguing to me, than to listen to those Inexplicable sounds she makes, poor Soul! and which when one has by dint of pains-taking found out her meaning pays one so ill for

[1] Mrs. Unwin.

one's trouble, and now let me say that I rejoice from my heart (as things are now circumstanced) that you have renounced your abominable Curacy. Could we once see this dear Soul restored you might then have ten Curacies instead of one, but indeed at present that your presence is so necessary at Weston, I have long lamented your being hampered with it, I hope therefore you mean to give it up to Mr. Butcher as you said you would write to him and I wish it because I know by so doing you will find a warm friend in Mr. Hill to the latest hour of your Existence as no man is more sensible of favours conferred on his Friends. As you say you shall pass all Wednesday in London it is a great Temptation to be sure, to torment you with commissions, but I do not think I know anything at this moment that I could wish to distract you about except to desire you to bring me a small bottle of Smyths Lavender Water in case you go through Bond Street, it must be that composed by James Smyth and Sons, Perfumers to His Majesty, New Bond Street—as the same *Mr. Smyth* may possibly have the true Eau-de-Cologne you may bring a bottle for your own sake, who I know will be very sick and want it—apropos of being *sick* I charge you not to see my face, till you have been *cupp'd.* Mr. Watkyns at the Bagnioin *Belton Street* opposite *Browlow St. Long Acre,* cupps extremely well and will not detain you more than *Ten minutes.* I beg therefore you will have it done, for you will find your thick blood marvellously relieved by it, it is worth all the leeches in the Universe, if you were to be Stuck as full of them as the man in the Almanack is stuck full of Darts and there can be no shadow of an objection—as it is not like *bleeding* and

if it does you no *good* you are morally *sure* it *cannot hurt you*. Indeed I am serious, and I think it will be very necessary ceremony previous to your making this Interesting visit, especially this hot weather, and now my *Sir John* (for I observe in old plays many Clergymen are Baronets, and indeed in real life one meets with many) I will detain you no longer either from your Church dutys, or the many others you will have to perform by leave-taking, etc.: I wish I knew your Uncle and Aunt Bodham that I might thank them for allowing you to come where indeed you are so much wanted and where you will find one at least truly glad to see you in,

Yours sincerely,
H. H.

Lady Hesketh to the Rev. John Johnson

READING TO COWPER

CHELTENHAM, *September* 24, 1798.

With this letter my good Sir John I shall send for the use of your fair Sister two different Muslins which I hope she will approve and will oblige me by accepting as a very *small* proof indeed of my *gratitude* for her unrivalled kindness and attention to our Invaluable Friend. Had I been in London I could have made more *choice* and might perhaps have found something more worthy of her acceptance.

I can only say that those I have sent appeared to me good of their kind—the Cambrick Muslin I believe has no fault except looking tumbled and dirty which I was vexed at, but could not help, and I preferred it to some much cleaner to look at, because they were

at the same time *coarser.* The piece I have sent consists of Ten yards—yd. and half wide—which I sincerely hope may make it useful to Mrs. Hewitt. There are 6 yds. of the other of which the breadth is the same, and which I know is more than she will put in a Gown. Pray give my kind Compts. to the fair lady in question and tell her I sincerely wish her Health to wear out *many* such muslins. And now dear Sir John having paid my Respects to your good Sister, let me proceed to thank *you* for your letter and for the cheering hopes you give me of our beloved Cousin's improved health. I am anxiously desirous to *hope* on this Interesting Subject and yet cannot help having many fears, lest the little ray of Sunshine we thought was visible some weeks ago may have been obscured! in general I have understood from those who have before seen this dear Creature in the same unhappy way, that his Recoverys are generally very Rapid, which certainly is not the case at present, or I should have heard from him *again.* I will however try the effect of another letter, as I think a few lines from me cannot hurt him, even if they do no good, and the wishes he so kindly expressed of seeing me once more gave me I own great hopes that this invaluable Friend and Relation was likely to be once more *himself*! When he is, I well know how much he loves and is attached to his Friends, and among that happy number I am vain enough to think there are *few* who have a higher place in his esteem than myself! but alas! when his fine understanding and excellent heart are sunk and obscured in the Shades of melancholy, he loves nobody, nor will he be persuaded that anybody loves him. I had a letter a few weeks ago from Lady Spencer who desires me to make

her grateful acknowledgements for one she had received from you, she says she would not answer it herself, because she would not give you additional trouble—and this was I daresay *one* reason—another very just one might relate to *herself*, for I know that her correspondencies are so very numerous, that she might employ 3 secretarys without any one of them running the chance of an idle Hour. Her Ladyship is enchanted with you and your Sister, and seems much pleased with your Reception of her. She charged me to tell you that she shall never come into Norfolk without calling at Dereham—she expressed some apprehensions that her visit might have been ill-timed in respect to our dear Cousin, who She thought was distressed by it. I am not however of her Ladyship's Opinion, for his Consenting to see her is a full proof that it gave him no pain—when *well* I know how much he admires that dear Lady and what pleasure he takes in her company and Conversation, but I do not believe by what he wrote to me that this was by any means the case at that time, he appeared not to consider her visit as directed to *him* but to the House, and the Room where he sat, which he said she seemed to approve very much. And now let me say that I rejoice you have been able to give him a Specimen of his own works by reading them over to him, but I am sorry your voice [broke ?] under it but can hardly wonder, as I know how apt you are to be hoarse, and a Poem in blank Verse is a great Tryal. You ought to have had a large collection of the *Patirosa* lozenges at your Elbow, before you entered upon this arduous Task—if you can't easily get at those you should apply very frequently to Sugar-Candy and Barley-Sugar to keep

your *Throttle moist* and take care whatever you do besides not to begin *under yr. voice*. I know you are apt when you read to begin in an unnatural *under* Voice, which is more trying and fatiguing Twenty times than if you were to Hollow [*sic*] take notice I don't mean to recommend that other extreme only as being less hurtfull than the former. I don't wonder our dear friend prohibited *John Gilpin*, as he seems always since his unhappy illness to suffer martyrdom from the idea of having wrote it! When it shall please God to bring him once more to Himself and to the right use of his facultys, I flatter myself he will see it in the same light that other people do, and be as pleased with it as they are. The moment you can tell me that this dear Soul is capable of laughing at dear Johnny Gilpin I shall be sure he is well and quite *himself*. I conclude our little friend Rose is returned to London, but I have not had even a line from him, by which I conclude he had no agreeable news to tell me. If he had I know he would have delighted to communicate it. I must beg when you write next my good Sir John that you will let me know how our dear Cousin received him, and what he thought of his visit? by the way when you write next you may direct to Clifton near Bristol as I believe I shall be there the week after next—that is about ye 10th of Oct. and if I am not it will be sent to me. Before I conclude I must desire your good and pretty Sister will not think herself under any necessity to write to me, I shall with pleasure receive her Approbation of the Muslins from your Pen. This tell her and believe me,

Your obliged and faithfull servt.,

H. Hesketh.

How am I to pay the money that may be owing to Sam's Mother or Aunt? Will the Rose convey it to the good Samaritan? If he can I will pay him again. By the way it occurs to me that a Silver Standish plainer than that intended for Hayley may be a very proper present to Dr. Gregson think of it yourself and consult the Rose—tho' I am afraid he has quite forgot that I wished him to bespeak a very elegant one as a present from our Cousin to his friend Hayley who ought long since to have had some Token of his remembrance.

Lady Hesketh to the Rev. John Johnson

ADVICE TO THE LEAN

BATH, *April* 25, 1799.

I am glad I have not a Frank for I heartily wish this letter might cost you 7*s.* instead of 8 pence!

Why thou wickedest of mortals! how could you be so barbarous as to own to me that our dear friend had written two little original Pieces and not to send them to me! O thou Savage Monster more Cruel than all the monsters of the Desert! worse even than Buonaparte and all his myrmidons—write them out directly, and send them to me, if you expect to die quietly in your bed with yr. Friends crying round you as an honest man ought to do. I know not what you think or how at such a time you could find leisure to look thro' black Crape, but I am so out of myself with joy at the idea of his having written anything which I look upon as so sure a proof of the Restoration of his faculties that I almost could hear unmoved the account of his

Leanness tho' that is so different from the account the Rose gave of him in the Winter. I am very glad you purpose giving him asses milk which I know must be the best thing he can take—I grieve to think of his poor Teeth being loose—but that Misfortune will make Chicken seem as tough as (?)—Beef—one thing I would advise that if you feed yr. Chickens at home, you would always put brown Sugar the coarsest you can get in their victuals—it Fats them *much better* and makes them *very tender*, and extremely good—believe me pray. I will send you two or three Recipes on the other side this paper of things quite proper for our dear Cousin—extremely nourishing—easy to eat and what I have no doubt he will like.

Till his digestion is stronger you must not attempt to give him solid meat—Sago puddings, blancmanges, jellys, and the like, are best, but before I proceed to the Receipt let me say that I insist my good Johnny (for I have taken a little *out* in my chair and my fury against you is somewhat appeased, therefore do I call you good Johnny) that you send me his verses forthwith—and moreover do I *insist* likewise that you will not on any account let any human Being see one line of them but Me—there are many reasons for this which shall all be detailed to you in time, tho' 'tis more than possible you may guess them, at present you have only to obey my arbitrary commands.

Adieu and may Heaven prosper you as you observe the directions of,

Yrs. sincerely,

H. H.

SYDNEY OWENSON (Lady Morgan) (1780–1859)

WAS the daughter of Robert Owenson, an Irish theatrical manager. She married Thomas Charles Morgan, M.D., who was afterwards knighted. In order to support her family after the death of her father she became a governess and subsequently an author, writing many novels—"The Wild Irish Girl," etc.—which were well known in their day. Lord Melbourne granted her a pension in 1837 in recognition of her literary work.

To her Father

THE PAINTED PIGEON

ST. ANDREW'S STREET, DUBLIN, *Sunday Night, 9 o'clock*, [1796 ?]

MY DEAREST SIR AND MOST DEAR PAPA,—You see how soon I begin to fulfil your commands, for you are not many hours gone. But you bid me not let a day pass before I began a journal and telling you all that happens to your two poor loving little girls, who were never so unhappy in all their lives as when they saw the yellow chaise wheels turn down the corner of Trinity Street, and lose sight of you, there we remained with our necks stretched out of the window, and Molly crying over us, "Musha, Musha!" when, looking up, she suddenly cried out, "See what God has sent to comfort ye!" and it was indeed remarkable that at that very moment the heavy clouds that rested over the dome of the round church just opposite, broke away, and in a burst of sunshine, down came flying a beautiful gold-coloured bird, very much resembling that beautiful picture in the picture-gallery in Kilkenny Castle which we so lately saw. Well, sir, it came fluttering down to the very sill of the window, Molly thinking, I believe, it was a miracle sent to comfort us, when, lo and behold,

dearest papa, what should it turn out to be but Mrs. Skee's old Tom pigeon, who roosts every night on the top of St. Andrew's, and whom her mischievous son *had painted yellow*!

Olivia made great game of Saint Molly and her miracle, and made such a funny sketch of her as made me die laughing, and that cheered us both up. After breakfast, Molly dressed us "neat as hands and pins could make us," she said, and we went to church; but just as we were stepping out of the hall door, who should come plump against us but James Carter, and he looked so well and handsome in his new college robe and square cap (the first time he had ever put them on) and a beautiful prayer-book in his hand, that we really did not know him. He said he had forgotten to leave a message for us on his way to the college chapel, from his grandma, to beg that we would come in next door and dine with her, as we must be very lonely after our father's departure, which offer, of course, we accepted; and he said with his droll air, "If you will allow me the honour, I will come in and escort you at four o'clock." "No, sir," said Molly, who hates him, and who said he only wanted to come in and have a romp with Miss Livy, "there is no need, as your grandmother lives only next door"; and so we went to church and Molly went to Mass; and all this diverted our grief though it did not vanquish it. Well, we had such a nice dinner! It is impossible to tell you how droll James Carter was, and how angry he made the dear old lady, who put him down constantly, with, "You forget, sir, that you are now a member of the most learned university in the world, and no longer a scrubby school boy." Well, the cloth was scarcely removed and grace said by James

(by the bye with such a long face), when he started up and said, "Come, girls, let us have a stroll in the College Park whilst Granny takes her nap." Oh, if you could only see Granny's face. "*No*, sir," said she, "the girls, as you are pleased to call the young ladies your cousins, shall *not* go and stroll with you among a pack of young collegians and audacious nursery-maids. Now that you are a member of the most learned university in the world, you might stay quiet at home on the Lord's day, and read a sermon for your young friends, or at least recommend them some good book to read whilst Granny takes her nap." All this time Jem looked the image of Mawworm in the play, and then taking two books off the window seats, he gave one to each of us, and said, "Mark, learn, and inwardly digest till I return."

The next moment he was flying by the window and kissing hands, and so Granny and the old black cat purring together, fell fast asleep, and we took up our books and seated ourselves in each of the parlour windows. Now what do you think, papa, these books were? Olivia's was "Sheridan's Dictionary," and mine was an "Essay on the Human Understanding," by Mr. Locke, gent. I was going to throw mine down, but, struck by some anecdotes about children, which brought me back to my dear old days at Drumcondra, I began at the beginning and read on for a full hour and a half. How it set me thinking from the moment when I had not a thought or an idea, which was the case in my infancy, for it is clear that we have no innate ideas when we are born, which certainly never struck me before; and this set me thinking upon what I could longest remember, and *I think it was the smell of the mignionette*, for I can

remember when I first smelled it, and the pleasure it gave me, and above all, your singing "Dreminda," the Black Cow, which always made me cry. But when we meet, please God, we will talk over all this, meantime I shall make extracts, as you know I always do, of what I read; for James has lent me the book, though it was his school prize, and very handsome, saying, rather pertly, "Why, you little fool, you won't understand a word of it." But I convinced him to the contrary at tea, to Granny's amazement, who said, "You might have found a better book to put into her hands on the Sabbath day."

Now, dear Sir, good-night; Molly is so teazing with her yawning, and saying, "After being up at six o'clock, one may, I suppose, go to bed before midnight." I forgot to tell you that good Mr. O'Flaherty has been here, and told Molly that he was very glad you were gone off and out of the way of the Philistines, and that he would bring us Castle franks twice a week from his friend Mr. Irk, who was in the Treasury, that would hold a house! So I shall have no conscience in writing to you on the score of postage. You are to direct your letters under cover to Mr. O'Flaherty to G. Irk, Esq., Castle, Dublin.

Your dutiful daughter,
SYDNEY.

Sydney Owenson to Thomas Charles Morgan

THE WHISKERS

October 31, 1811.

I am not half such a little rascal as you suppose; the best feelings only have detained me from you; and

feelings better than the *best* will bring me back to you. I must be more or less than woman to resist tenderness, goodness, excellence, like yours, and I am simply woman, aye, dear, "every inch a woman." I feel a little kind of tingling about the heart, at once more feeling myself nestled in yours; do you remember? Well, dear, if you don't I will soon revive your recollection—I said I would not write to you to-day, but I could not resist it, and I am now going off to a man of business, and about Lady Abercorn's books, in the midst of the snow, and pinched with cold. God bless you, love.

S. O.

Your song is charming; you are a clever wretch, and I love you more for your talents than your virtues, you *thing of the world.* What put it into your stupid head that I would not return at Christmas? Did I ever say so, blockhead?

Well, I have only the old *story* to *tell*, no more than yourself—

> And I *loves* you, and you loves me,
> And oh! how happy we shall be.

Take care of the *whiskers*—mind they are not to grow thus—but thus— [Here follows in the letter a couple of droll portraits of Morgan, with the whiskers grown and trimmed in the two fashions then in favour].

Sydney Owenson to Thomas Charles Morgan

IRISH LORE

December 24, 1811.

I told you yesterday, dearest, that you should have a long letter to day, and here comes one as short as

myself. The reason is, that a good old Irishman has sent me 20,000 volumes of old Irish books to make extracts from, and to return them directly, and here I am in poor Dad's room just after binding up his poor blistered head, and I am just going to work pell-mell, looking like a little conjurer, with all my black-lettered books about me. I am extracting from Edmund Spenser, who loved Ireland *tant soit peu*; dearest, your letters are delicious, 'tis such a sweet feeling to create happiness for those we love; if we have but *de quoi vivre* in a *nutshell house* in London, *I* shall be satisfied, and you shall be made as happy as Irish lore, Irish talent, and Irish fun can make a grave, *cold*, shy Englishman. Your song is divine. Here is Livy just come in and insists on saying so; but first I must tell you that poor, dear papa continues very ill, and so low-spirited that it is heart-breaking to listen to him.

SYDNEY.

Lady Morgan to Lady Stanley

GETTING STRAIGHT

35, KILDARE STREET, DUBLIN, *Monday, May* 17 [1813].

Vous voilà aux abois, ma chère dame!! You see I am not to be distanced; retreat as you will, I still pursue. When I am within a mile of you, you will not see me; when I write you will not answer; and still here I am at your feet, because I *will not be rebutée*, nor (throw me off as you may) will I ever give you up until I find something that resembles you, something to fill up the place you have so long occupied; the fact is, my dear Lady Stanley, it is pure selfishness that ties me to you. *I do not like women*, I cannot get on with them! And

except the excessive tenderness which I have always felt for my sister be called friendship, you (and one or two more, *par parenthèse*) are the only woman to whom I could ever *lier* myself for a week together. *Se devancer de son sexe* is as dangerous as *De se devancer de son Siècle*. It was no effort, no *willing* of mine that has given me a *little* the start of the major part of them; dear little souls! who, as Ninon says, "*le trouvent plus commode d'être jolie.*" The principle was *there*; active and *restless*, the spur was given, and *off I went*, happy in the result that my comparative superiority obtained me *one* such friend as yourself—that is, as you *were*; but I fear you now cut me dead.

We have at last got into a home of our own; we found an old, dirty, dismantled house, and we have turned our *piggery* into a decent sort of hut enough; we have made it clean and comfortable, which is all our moderate circumstances will admit of, save *one little bit of a room*, which is a real bijou, and it is about *four inches by three*, and, therefore, one could afford to ornament it *a little*; it is fitted up in the *gothic*, and I have collected into it the best part of a very good cabinet of natural history of Sir Charles, eight or nine hundred volumes of choice books, in French, English, Italian, and German; some little miscellaneous curiosities, and a few scraps of old china, so that with muslin draperies, etc., etc., I have made no contemptible *set* out. *I was thinking that maybe Susette* could enrich my store in the old china way, if she has any refuse of that sort which you may have thrown her in with your cast-off wardrobe—a broken cup, a bottomless bowl, a spoutless teapot—in a word, anything old and shattered, that is china, and of no value to you, will be of use and ornament to

me, and Captain Skinner has promised to bring it over for me.

With respect to authorship, I fear it is over. I have been making chair-covers instead of periods; hanging curtains instead of raising systems, and cheapening pots and pans instead of selling sentiment and philosophy. Meantime, my husband is, as usual, deep in study, and if his *popularity* here may be deemed a favourable omen, will, I trust, soon be *deep in practice*. Well, always dear friend; any chance of a line in answer of my three pages of verbiage? Just make the effort of *taking up the pen*, and if you only write "Glorvina, I am well, and love you still," I will be contented. Under all circumstances,

Yours affectionately
S. MORGAN.

Lady Morgan to her sister, Lady Clarke

BRITISHERS ABROAD

CALAIS, *August* 27, 1818.

Here we are, my dear love, after a tremendous expense at the hotel at Dover, where we slept last night, and embarked at twelve o'clock this morning, in a stormy sea. The captain remained behind to try and get more passengers, and the result was that we remained tossing in the bay near two hours, almost to the extinction of our existence. In my life I never suffered so much. As to Morgan, he was a dead man. The whole voyage we were equally bad; and the ship could not be got into port—so we were flung, more dead than alive, into a wretched sail-boat, and how we got on

shore I do not know. It rained in torrents all the time; but the moment I touched French ground, and breathed French air, I got well. We came to our old *auberge*, MM. Maurice's, and the first place we got to was the kitchen fire, for we were wet and cold;—and really, in that kitchen I saw more beauty than at many of our London parties. Madame Maurice and her daughter are both handsome women. We were obliged to have bedrooms opposite the *auberge*, as it was quite full, but the house, Madame told us, belongs to "*mama*." She is herself about fifty, so you may guess what "mama" is: she is *admirable*—a powdered head, three feet high, and souflet gauze winker cap. Our chambermaid is worth *anything*. She is *not* one of the kitchen beauties, *par exemple*; but here she is, an ugly woman of seventy, in her chemise, with the simple addition of a red corset and a petticoat, several gold chains, and an immense cross of shiny stones on her neck, with long gold earrings, and with such a cap as I wore at a masquerade. With all this her name is Melanie; and Melanie has beauty airs as well as beauty name. Whilst she was lighting our wood fire (for it is severely cold) I asked her some questions about Mr. Maurice. You may guess what a personage he is, for she said: *Ah, pour notre M. Maurice on ne parle que de lui—partout, Madame, on ne s'occupe que de notre M. Maurice.* So much for Miss Melanie and *her* Mr. Grundy. We dined at the *table d'hôte*. We had an Englishman and his wife and a Frenchman only, for our company. The Frenchman was delightful. We had a capital table, with everything good and in profusion; but the Englishman sat scowling, and called for all sorts of *English sauces*, said the fish was infamous and found fault with

everything, and said to the waiter—"What do you mean by your confounded sour mustard?" The poor waiter to all his remarks only answered in English, "How is dat, sar?" The Burgundy was "such d——d stuff." And the *last* remark was, "Why, your confounded room has not been papered these twenty years," was too much for our good breeding; and we and the Frenchman laughed outright. Is it not funny to see our countrymen leave their own country for the sole *pleasure* of being dissatisfied with everything?

We leave this early to-morrow, and shall be in Paris the next day, please God. Lafayette is to come up for us to take us to his château; until, therefore, I leave the post town of *La Grange*, direct to the Hôtel d'Orléans, where we shall go on our arrival in Paris. I feel myself so gay here already that I am sure my *elements* are all French. A thousand loves, and French and Irish kisses to the darlings.

S. M.

Lady Morgan to her sister, Lady Clarke

THE BONAPARTE FAMILY

Rome, *February* 4, 1820.

Dear Love,—Your letters have given us great uneasiness about our house; but I have no room for any feeling except joy and gratitude that you are well out of your troubles, and that the young knight promises to do honour to his people.

Now for Rome, and our mode of existence. Immediately after breakfast we start on our tours to ruins, churches, galleries, collections, etc., etc., and return late; dine, on an average, three times a week at English

dinner-parties ; we are scarcely at home in the evenings, and never in the mornings. The Duchess of Devonshire is unceasing in her attentions to me ; not only is her house open to us, but she calls and takes me out to show me what is best to be seen. As Cardinal Gonsalvi does not receive ladies, she arranged that I was to be introduced to him in the Pope's chapel ; as he was coming out in the procession of cardinals, he stepped aside, and we were presented. He insisted upon calling on me, and took our address. Cardinal Fesche (Bonaparte's uncle) is quite my beau ; he called on us the other day, and wanted me to drive out with him, but Morgan looked at his scarlet hat and stockings, and would not let me go. We have been to his palace, and he has shown us his fine collection (one of the finest in Rome). Lord William Russell, Mr. Adair, the Charlemonts, etc., are coming to us this evening. Madam Mère (Napoleon's mother) sent to say she would be glad to see me ; we were received quite in an imperial style. I never saw so fine an old lady—still quite handsome. She was dressed in rich crimson velvet, trimmed with sable, with a point-lace ruff and head-dress. The pictures of her sons hung round the room, all in royal robes, and her daughter and grandchildren, and at the head of them all, *old Mr. Bonaparte !* Every time she mentioned Napoleon the tears came in her eyes. She took me into her bedroom to show me the miniatures of her three children. She is full of sense, feeling, and spirit, and not the least what I expected—vulgar. We dined at the Princess Borghese's—Louis Bonaparte, the ex-king of Holland's son, dined there—a fine boy ; Lord William Russell, and some Roman ladies in the evening. She invited us all to see her jewels ; we passed through

eight rooms *en suite* to get to her bedroom. The bed was white-and-gold, the quilt point-lace, and the sheets French cambric embroidered. The jewels were magnificent.

Nothing can be kinder than the Charlemont family. We were at three *soirées* all in one night. With great difficulty I at last got at Miss Curran,[1] for she leads the life of a hermit. She is full of talent and intellect, pleasant, interesting, and original; and she paints like an artist.

God bless you.

S. M.

Lady Morgan to her sister, Lady Clarke

IMPRESSIONS OF ST. PETER'S

ROME, PALAZZO GIORGIO, *April* 2, 1820.

MY DEAREST LOVE,—Here we are again, safe and sound, as I trust this will find you all. We were much disappointed at not finding a letter here on our return, and now all our hopes are fixed on Venice, for which we should have departed this day, but for the impossibility of getting horses; the moment the Holy Week was over there was a general break-up, and this strange whirligig, travelling world, who were all mad to get here, are now all mad to get away. Before I place myself at Rome, however, I must take you back with me for a little to Naples. Just as I despatched my letter to you, with the account of my February summer, arrives the month of March with storms of winds, a fall of snow on the mountains, and all this in an immense barrack, called

1 Daughter of the Irish politician. She painted the best-known portrait of Percy Bysshe Shelley, now in the National Portrait Gallery.

a palace, without chimneys, or doors that shut, or windows that close. In short, as to climate, take it all in all, I am as well satisfied now with my old, wet-blanket Irish climate as any other. I had nothing to complain of, however, at Naples but the climate—nothing could exceed the kindness and politeness of the Neapolitans to us both. Every Monday we were invited to a *festino* given by the Neapolitan nobility to the English, and our time passed, in point of society, most delightfully. There is less to be seen than at Rome ; but those few sights are more curious and more perfect than anything at Rome except the Coliseum. The buried town at Pompeii, for instance, is unique—a complete Roman town as it stood two thousand years ago, almost all the furniture in high preservation—but this is beyond the compass of a letter. We left pleasant, brilliant Naples with infinite regret, and our journey here was most curious. Notwithstanding we were five carriages strong, yet at each military post (and they were at every quarter of a mile) two soldiers leaped upon our carriage, one before and another behind, with their arms, and gave us up to the next guard, who gave us two more guards, and thus we performed our perilous journey like prisoners of state. You may guess the state of the country by this. At Rome, however, all danger from bandits ends ; and when I caught a view of the cupola of St. Peter's, rising amidst the solitudes of the Campagna, I offered up as sincere a thanksgiving as ever was preferred to his sanctity. We arrived in Rome in time for the first of the ceremonies of the Holy Week. All our English friends at Naples arrived at the same time ; but after the Holy Week at Rome, never talk of Westminster elections, Irish fairs, or English bear-

gardens! I never saw the horrors of a crowd before, nor such a curious *mélange* of the ludicrous and the fearful. We had a ticket sent us for all by Cardinal Fesche, and saw all; but it was at the risk of our limbs and lives. Of all the ceremonies the benediction was the finest, and of all the sights, St. Peter's illuminated on Easter Sunday night, the most perfectly beautiful. We were from eight o'clock in the morning till two o'clock in the afternoon in the church: all the splendour of the earth is nothing to the procession of the Pope and Cardinals. Morgan was near being crushed to death, only he cried out to Lord Charlemont to give him some money (for he could not get to his pocket), which he threw to a soldier, who rescued him. I saw half the red bench of England tumbling down staircases, and pushed back by the guard. We have Queen Caroline here. At first this made a great fuss whether she was or was not to be visited by her subjects, when lo! she refused to see any of them, and lead the most perfectly retired life! We met her one day driving out in a state truly royal; I never saw her so splendid. Young Austen followed in an open carriage; he is an interesting-looking young man. She happened to arrive at an inn near Rome when Lord and Lady Leitrim were there; she sent for them and invited them to tea. Lady Leitrim told me her manner was perfect, and altogether she was a most improved woman; the Baron attended her at tea, but merely as a chamberlain, and was not introduced. Before you will receive this, if accounts be true, Her Majesty will be in England. I think you will not be sorry to hear that if we live and do well, our next letter will be dated from Paris.

S. M.

Lady Morgan to ——

PAGANINI'S LOVE STORY

DUBLIN, 1831.

. . . Since our return we have been in perpetual agitation about the Reform Bill, but I picked one gay, light-hearted, agreeable evening out of the bustle—a dinner and *soirée* for Paganini. I asked him, not as a miraculous fiddle-player, but as a study. He came into the drawing-room in a great-coat, a clumsy walking-stick, and his hat in his hand (quite a Penruddock figure), and walking up to me, made a regular set speech in his Genoese Italian, which I am convinced was taught him by his secretaries ; it abounded in *donnas*, *celebrittissimas*, and all the superlatives of Italian gallantry. At dinner he seemed wonderfully occupied with the dishes in succession, and frequently said, "*ho troppo magiato !*" at each dish, exclaiming, "*bravissimo ! excellentissimo !*" The fact is, I copied a Florentine dinner as closely as I could, having had a Florentine cook all the time we were in Italy ; so we had a *minestra al Vermicelli*, *maccaroni*, in all forms, etc., etc. I asked him if he were not the happiest man in the world, every day acquiring so much fame and so much money. He sighed, and said he should be, but for one thing, "*i ragazzi*," the little blackguards that ran after him in the streets. In the evening I took him into the boudoir ; we had a *tête-à-tête* of an hour, in which he told me his whole story ; but in such an odd, simple Italian, gossiping manner, half by signs, looks, and inflections of the voice, that though I can take him off to the life verbally, I can give no idea of him on paper ; still here is the outline. His father and mother in humble life in Genoa fond of music—no

more. At four years old he played the guitar, and, untaught, attended all the churches to sing, and at seven years of age composed something like a *cantata*; then he took up the violin, and made such progress that his father travelled about with him from one Italian town to another, till he attracted the attention and attained the patronage of Elise Bonaparte, then Grand Duchess of Tuscany. He was taken into her family, and played constantly at her brilliant little court; there he fell in love with one of her *dames d'honneur*, who turned his head, he said, and he became *pazzo per amore*, and found his violin expressed his passion better than he could. Mlle. B—— became his guide and inspiration; but they had a terrible *fracas*, they fought, fell out, and separated. One day, in his despair, he was confiding his misery to his beloved violin, and made it repeat the quarrel just as it happened; he almost made it articulate the very words, and in the midst of this singular colloquy Mlle. de B—— rushed into the room and threw her arms around his neck, and said, "Paganini, your genius has conquered." Their reconciliation followed, and she begged he would note down those inspirations of love; he did so, and called it, *Il Concerto d'Amore*. Having left it by accident on the piano of the Grand Duchess, she saw, and commanded him to play it; he did so, and the dialogue of the two strings had a wonderful success. He married afterwards a chorus-singer at Trieste, and she was the mother of his little Paganini, whom he doated on. The mother, he said, abandoned them both, and that now he was no longer susceptible of the charms of the "*Belle Donne*." His violin was his mistress. While telling me all this, he rolled his eyes in a most extraordinary way, and

assumed a look that it is impossible to define—really aud truly something demoniacal. Still, he seems to me to be a stupefied and almost idiotic creature

AMELIA OPIE (1769-1853)

DAUGHTER of Dr. Alderson of Norwich. She married John Opie, R.A., the great portrait-painter, in 1798. In 1801 her first novel, "Father and Daughter," was published and shortly afterward her poems. Her house was the rendezvous of all the most famous authors and artists of the day. She wrote many stories, and after her husband's death published his lectures. In 1825 Mrs. Opie became a Quakeress, withdrew from society, and abandoned fiction, but she continued to write for the magazines.

To Mrs. Taylor

JOHN OPIE'S PROPOSAL

Tuesday, 1797.

Why have I not written to you? It is a question I cannot answer, you must answer it yourself, but attribute my silence *not* to any diminution of affection for you. . .

Believe me, I still hear the kind fears you expressed for me when we parted, and still see the flattering tears that you shed when you bade me adieu. Indeed, I shall never forget them. I had resolved to write to you as soon as ever I had seen Richard, but it was a resolution made to be broken, like many others in this busy scene. Had I written to you as soon as I left, of all those whom I have heard talk of and praise you as you deserve, I should have ruined you in postage. Poor Mr. C—— is desperately in love with you, by his own confession, and his wife admires his taste. Mr. Godwin was much gratified by your letter, and he avowed that

AMELIA OPIE

From a photograph by Emery Walker, after the painting by John Opie, R.A.

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it made him love you better than he did before, and Mrs. Godwin was not surprised at it; by the bye, he never told me whether you congratulated him on his marriage [1] or not; but now I remember, it was written before that wonder-creating event was known. Heigho! what charming things would sublime theories be, if one could make one's practice keep up with them; but I am convinced it is impossible, and am resolved to make the best of every-day nature.

I shall have much to tell you in a *tête-à-tête* of the Godwins, etc.—so much that a letter could not contain or do it justice; but this will be *entre nous*. I love to make observations on extraordinary characters; but not to mention those observations if they be not favourable. "Well! a whole page, and not a word yet of the state of her heart; the subject most interesting to me," methinks I hear your exclaim; patience, friend, it will come soon, but not go away soon, were I to analyse it, and give it you in detail. Suffice, that it is in the most comical state possible, but I am not unhappy; on the contrary, I enjoy everything: and if my head be not turned by the large draughts which my vanity is daily quaffing, I shall return to Norwich much happier than I left it. Mr. Opie has (but *mum*) been my declared lover, almost ever since I came. I was ingenuous with him upon principle, and I told him my situation, and the state of my heart. He said he should still persist, and would risk all consequences to his own peace, and so he did and does; and I have not resolution to forbid his visits. Is not this abominable? Nay, more, were I not certain my father would disapprove such, or indeed *any* connection for me, there are moments when,

[1] To Mary Wollstonecraft.

ambitious of being a wife and mother, and of securing for myself a companion for life, capable of entering into all my pursuits and of amusing me by his—I could almost resolve to break off all fetters, and relinquish, too, the wide, and often aristocratic circle in which I now move, and become the wife of a man whose genius has raised him from obscurity into fame and comparative affluence ; but indeed my mind is on the pinnacle of its health when I thus feel ; and on a pinnacle one can't remain long ! But I had forgotten to tell you the attraction Mr. O—— held out, that staggered me beyond anything else ; it was, that if I was averse to leaving my father he would joyfully consent to his living with us. What a temptation to me, who am every moment sensible that the claims of my father will always be, with me, superior to any claims that a lover can hold out ! Often do I rationally and soberly state to Opie the reasons that might urge me to marry him, in time, and the reasons why I never would be happy with him nor he with me ; but it always ends in his persisting in his suit, and protesting his willingness to wait for my decision, even while I am seriously rejecting him, and telling him I *have* decided. . . . Mr. Holcroft, too, has had a mind to me, but he has no chance. May I trouble you to tell my father that while I was out yesterday Hamilton called, and left a note, simply saying, " Richardson says he means to *call* on you ; I have seen him this morning." Before I seal this letter I hope to receive my farce from him ; I will put my letter by till the boy returns from R——. I have been capering about the room for joy at having gotten my farce back ! Now idleness adieu, when Dicky and I have held sweet converse together ! . . .

Amelia Opie to Mrs. Taylor

OPIE AND HIS STUDIO

January 27, 1800.

My dear Friend,— . . . John, I suppose, informed you he called on us; he promised to come and dine with us, but has not been since; and as I have been tied by the foot ever since the day after Christmas-day, from having worn a tight-bound shoe, which made a hole in my heel. I do not regret his false-heartedness, as when he does come we are to go church and meeting hunting. I will give you a specimen of your two sons. "John," said I, "will you take a letter from me to your mother?" "Certainly," replied John, "for then I shall be sure of being welcome." "Fye," returned I, "you know, Mr. Courtier, you want nothing to add to the heartiness of the welcome you will receive at home." "No, indeed," said Richard; "and if Mrs. Opie sends her letter by you, it will be one way of making it less valued and attended to than it would otherwise be." To the truth of this speech I subscribed, and *wrote not.* I should like to know whether you are most pleased with John's polish or Richard's sincerity. . . . *Apropos*, I was very sorry to hear of your husband's severe return of gout, but as he had a long respite before, I hope he will again. Severe illness has (I often think) on the frame the same effect that a severe storm has on the atmosphere. I myself am much better in every respect since my late indisposition than I was before; and the mind is never perhaps so serene and tranquil as when one is recovering from sickness. I enjoyed my confinement, as I was not like your good man, in pain. My husband was so kind as to sit with me every evening, and even to intro-

duce his company to my bedside. No less than three beaux had the honour of a *sitting* in my chamber. Quite Parisian, you see, but I dare not own this to some women. I have led a most happy and delightful life since my return, and in the whole two months have not been out more than four times; so spouse and I had no squabbles about visiting, and that is the only thing we ever quarrel about. If I would stay at home for ever, I believe he would be merry from morning to night; and be a lover more than a husband! He had a mind to accompany me to an assembly in Nottingham Place, but Mrs. Sharpe (a most amiable woman) frightened him by declaring he should dance with her if he did.

What the friendships of dissipated women are, Mrs. R. H.'s going to a ball, while poor H. T. was dying, sufficiently proves. I remember with satisfaction that I saw her, and shook hands with her, at the November ball. Indeed she had a *heart*; and I can't help recollecting that when I had the scarlet fever she called on me every day, regardless of danger, and sat at the foot of my bed. Besides, she was the friend of twenty years, and companion of my childhood, and I feel the older I grow the more tenderly I cling to the scenes, and recollections, and companions, of my early hours. When I now look at Mr. Bruckner's black cap, my memory gets astride on the tassel of it, and off she gallops at a very pleasant rate; wooden desks, green bags, blotted books, inked hands, faces, and gowns, rise in array before me. I see Mrs. Beecroft (Miss Dixon, I should say) with her plump, good-humoured face, laughing till she loses her eyes, and shakes the whole form; but I must own, the most welcome objects that the hoofs of memory's hobby-horse kick up, are the great B.'s, or bons on my exercises!

I do not choose to remember how often I was marked for being *idle*. . . . So you have had risks. I am glad they are over. Mrs. Adair called on me this morning, and she tells me that Charles Harvey was terribly alarmed after he had committed Col. Montgomery. A fine idea this gives one of the state of a town, where a man is alarmed at having done his duty!

I am very much afraid my spouse will not live long; he has gotten a fit of tidyness on him; and yesterday evening and this evening he has employed himself in putting his painting-room to rights. This confirms what I said to him the other day; that almost every man was *beau* and sloven, at some time of his life. Charles Fox once wore *pink heels*; now he has an unpowdered crop. And I expect that as my husband has been a sloven hitherto, he will be a *beau* in future; for he is so pleased with his handywork, and capers about, and says, "Look there! how neat! and how prettily I have disposed the things! Did you ever see the like?" Certainly I never did where he was before. Oh! he will certainly be a *beau* in time. Past ten o'clock! I must now say farewell; but let me own that I missed you terribly when I was ill. I have no *female* friend and neighbour; and men are not the thing on such occasions. Besides, you on *all* occasions would be the female neighbour I should choose. Love to your spouse. Write soon, and God bless you.

Amelia Opie to (?) Dr. Alderson

FIRST CONSUL BUONAPARTE

1802.

We had now been several days in Paris, and yet we had not seen the First Consul! I own that my impa-

tience to see him had been abated, by the growing conviction which I felt of the possible hollowness of the idol so long exalted.

But still we were desirous of beholding him; and I was glad when we received a letter from our obliging acquaintance, Count de Lastergrie, informing us that Buonaparte would review the troops on such a day on the Place du Carousel, and that he had procured a window for us, whence we should be able to see it to advantage. But, on account of my short-sightedness, I was still more glad when our friend Le Masquerier (a very successful young English painter) informed us that he had the promise of a window for my husband and myself in an apartment on the ground-floor of the Tuileries, whence we should be able to have a near view of Buonaparte:—our friends, therefore, profited by M. de Lastergrie's kindness, and we went to the palace. As the time of seeing the First Consul drew nigh, I was pleased to feel all my original impressions in his favour return. This might be a weakness in me, but it was, I hope, excusable; and our sense of his greatness and importance was, as my husband observed, heightened by seeing the great man of our own country—he who was there a sight himself to many—cross the Place du Carousel, with his wife on his arm, going, as we believed, to gaze, like us, on at least a more fortunate man than himself—for at that time Charles James Fox had not seen Napoleon Buonaparte.

The door which opened into the hall of the palace was shut, but, after some persuasion, I prevailed on the attendant to open it; and he said he would keep it open till the First Consul had mounted his horse, if I would

engage that we would all of us stand upon the threshold, and not once venture beyond it.

With these conditions we promised to comply; and, full of eager expectation, I stationed myself where I could command the white marble stairs of the palace—those steps once stained with the blood of the faithful Swiss Guards, and on which I now expected to behold the "Pacificator," as he was called by the people and his friends—the hero of Lodi. Just before the review was expected to begin, we saw several officers in gorgeous uniforms ascend the stairs, one of whom, whose helmet seemed entirely of gold, was, as I was told, Eugène de Beauharnais. A few minutes afterwards there was a rush of officers down the stairs, and amongst them I saw a short pale man, with his hat in his hand, who, as I thought, resembled Lord Erskine, in profile, but, though my friend said in a whisper, "*C'est lui*," I did not comprehend that I beheld Buonaparte, till I saw him stand alone at the gate. In another moment he was on his horse, and rode slowly past the window; while I, with every nerve trembling with strong emotion, gazed on him intently; endeavouring to commit each expressive, sharply chiselled feature to memory; contrasting also, with admiring observation, his small simple hat, adorned with nothing but a little tri-coloured cockade, and his blue coat, guiltless of gold embroidery, with the splendid head adornings and dresses of the officers who followed him.

A second time he slowly passed the window; then, setting spurs to his horse, he rode amongst the ranks, where some faint huzzas greeted him from the crowd on the opposite side of the Place du Carousel. At length he took his station before the palace, and as we

looked at him out of the window, we had a very perfect view of him for nearly three quarters of an hour. I thought, but perhaps it was fancy, that the countenance of Buonaparte was lighted up with peculiar pleasure as the *corps d'élite*, wearing some mark of distinction, defiled before him, bringing up the rear—that fine, gallant corps, which, as we are told, he had so often led on to victory; but this might be my fancy. Once we saw him speak, as he took off his hat to remove the hair from his heated forehead, and this gave us an opportunity of seeing his front face, and his features in action. Soon after, we saw him give a sword of honour to one of the soldiers; and he received a petition which an old woman presented to him; but he gave it unread to some one near him. At length the review ended; too soon for me. The Consul sprang from his horse—we threw open our door again, and, as he slowly reascended the stairs, we saw him very near us, and in full face again, while his bright, restless, expressive, and, as we fancied, dark blue eyes, beaming from under long black eyelashes, glowed over us with a scrutinising but complacent look; and thus ended, and was completed, the pleasure of the spectacle.

I could not speak; I had worked myself up to all my former enthusiasm for Buonaparte; and my frame still shook with the excitement I had undergone. The next day sobered me again, however, but not much, as will be soon seen.

The day after the review, our accomplished countrywoman Maria Cosway, took the President of the Royal Academy, Benjamin West, and ourselves, on a round of picture-seeing; and at length we proceeded to the residence of a gentleman, who was, I concluded, only

a picture dealer, or one of the many *nouveaux riches* who had fine collections; because, whenever she spoke of him, Maria Cosway called him nothing but "Fesch." We stopped at the door of a very splendid Chaussée d'Antin, and were met at the top of a magnificent flight of stairs by a gentleman in the garb of an ecclesiastic. His hair was powdered, and he wore it in a full round curl behind, after the fashion of an abbé; his coat was black, but his stockings were of bright purple; his shoe- and knee-buckles were of gold; round his neck he wore a glossy white silk handkerchief, from under which peeped forth a costly gold crucifix. His countenance was pleasing, his complexion uncommonly blooming, his manners courteous, and his age (as I afterwards learned) was thirty-nine. This gentleman was the "Fesch" we came to visit; but I soon discovered that though he lived in the house, it was not his own; for Maria Cosway was summoned into an adjoining room, where I overheard her conversing with a female; and when she returned she told us that Madame Buonaparte Mère (as she was called to distinguish her from her daughter-in-law), the mistress of the hotel, was very sorry that she could not see us, but that she was so unwell, she was obliged to keep her bed, and could not receive strangers. So, then! we were in the house of Letitia Buonaparte, and the mother of Napoleon! and in the next room to her, but could not see her! How unfortunate! However, I was sure I had heard her voice. I now supposed that "Fesch" was her spiritual director, and believed his well studied dress, *si bien soignée*, was a necessary distinction, as he belonged to the mother of the First Consul.

He seemed a merry, as well as a courteous man; and once he took Maria Cosway aside, and showed her a letter that he had only just received, which, to judge from the hearty laugh of "Fesch," and the answering smiles of the lady, gave them excessive pleasure. By and by, however, I heard and observed many things which made me think that "Fesch" was more than I apprehended him to be. I therefore watched for an opportunity to ask the President who this obliging person was——"What!" cried he, "do you not know that he is the Archbishop of Lyons, the uncle of Buonaparte? I was astonished! What! the person so familiarly spoken of as "Fesch," could be indeed *du sang* of the Buonapartes, and the First Consul's uncle! How my respect for him increased when I heard this! How interesting became his every look and word; and how grateful I felt for his obliging attention to us!

While we were looking at the pictures, his niece, the wife of Murat, drove to the door; and I saw the top of her cap as she alighted, but no more, as she went immediately to her mother's bedside.

After devoting to us at least two hours, the Archbishop conducted us down the noble staircase, to the beautiful hall of entrance, and courteously dismissed us. My companions instantly went away, but I lingered behind; for I had caught a view of a colossal bust of Buonaparte in a helmet, which stood on a table, and I remained gazing on it, forgetful of all but itself. Yes! there were those finely cut features, that coupe de menton à l'Apollon! and, though I thought the likeness a flattered one, I contemplated it with great pleasure, and was passing my hand admiringly over the salient

chin, when I heard a sort of suppressed laugh, and, turning round, saw the Archbishop observing me, and instantly, covered with confusion, I ran out of the house. I found Maria Cosway explaining what the letter was which had given "Fesch" and her such evident satisfaction. It was nothing less than a letter from Rome, informing him that he would probably be put in nomination for the next cardinal's hat.

How soon he was nominated I cannot remember, but it is now many years since the blooming ecclesiastic of 1802 exchanged his purple for scarlet stockings, his mitre for a red hat, and his title of Archbishop of Lyons for that of Cardinal Fesch.

LUCY AIKIN (1781–1864)

DAUGHTER of John Aikin, M.D. Miss Aikin was the author of several books, one of which, "Memoirs of the Courts of Queen Elizabeth, James I, and of Charles I," was warmly praised by Macaulay. She also wrote a "Life of Addison," and a memoir of her aunt, Mrs. Barbauld, herself a well-known author.

To Mrs. Taylor

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

STOKE NEWINGTON, *January 27*, 1803.

. . . I am full of plans and projects for the ensuing spring, when it arrives; sometimes I dream of another visit to the Welsh mountains—then my fancy rambles to the Highlands of Scotland; but one of the most agreeable of my anticipations, and that which is most likely to be realised, is another journey to dear old

Norwich; which I need not assure you that I shall enjoy as much as the last; and more I cannot say. Yes, my dear Mrs. Taylor, the longer I live the more am I convinced that connections formed in early childhood are the strongest, the most durable, and the most delightful of all. The image of the friend of infancy is associated with a thousand endearing recollections of those days of careless, but unclouded happiness, that pass so swiftly, never to return. The friend of riper youth is ever connected in our memory with some of those cares, those passions, those severe pains and lively pleasures that give to this period a more exquisite flavour of bitter and sweet than to the preceding, or perhaps any subsequent portion of life. When I feel my mind agitated by the too vivid ideas of scenes that have passed more recently, I think of Norfolk, and the careless days spent among my early friends, and all is calm again. Of what other place can I think with unmingled pleasure, with perfect satisfaction? But what has enticed my pen into this long strain of sentimental reflection? I fear you will not much thank me for anything so *sombre*. . . .

There is a singular work lately published, of which I should much like to hear your opinion, Mary Hayes's "Female Biography." She is a great disciple of Mrs. Godwin, you know, and a zealous stickler for the equal rights and equal talents of our sex with the other; but, alas, though I would not so much as whisper this to the pretended lords of the creation—

> Her arguments directly tend
> Against the cause she would defend.

At the same time that she attempts to make us despise

the frivolous rivalry of beauty and fashion, she holds forth such tremendous examples of the excesses of more energetic characters, that one is much inclined to imitate those quiet, good folks who bless God they are no geniuses. However, a general biography is something like a great London rout: everybody is there, good, bad, and indifferent, veritable and not veritable, so that a squeamish lady scarcely knows whom she may venture to speak to. Alas, alas! though Miss Hayes has wisely addressed herself to the ladies alone, I am afraid the gentlemen will get a peep at her book and repeat with tenfold energy that women have no business with anything but nursing children and mending stockings. I do not think her book is written quite in an edifying manner either—the morals are too French for my taste.

But what are we to think of Madame de Staël's new novel,[1] that all Paris, all Geneva, and all London is reading? I hear Rousseau is revived in her, with all his "virtue in words and vice in actions," and all his dangerous eloquence. I have not read the book yet, but we voted it into a lady's book society here, and had afterwards some doubts whether it ought to be circulated. My mother wickedly proposed that all works written by ladies should be carefully examined by a committee before they are admitted into the society. And now that I have mentioned our society, which is a great hobby-horse with my aunt Barbauld and me, I must beg your congratulations on our spirit in setting up an institution into which not a single man is admitted, even to keep the accounts. I must indeed whisper in your ear that it is no very easy matter to get the ladies

[1] Apparently "Delphine," 1802.

to suspend their dissertations on new plays and new fashions to discuss the merits of books, and that sometimes it is rather difficult for the president, treasurer, and secretary, calling all at once to order, to obtain a hearing. But our meetings are not the less amusing for this. . . .

Our fireside circle form in cordial remembrance with

Your very affectionate

L. AIKIN.

Lucy Aiken to Mrs. Aiken

TRAFALGAR

STOKE NEWINGTON, *November* 1805.

We do grumble a little, my dear mother, I assure you, at being so long without you; but knowing how very much you are wanted where you are, we think it would be wrong to press your return sooner than the day you mention, against which time I will take care to have all preparations made. Well! what do you all say to this glorious, dear-bought victory? Twenty ships for a hero! At this rate I think our enemies would be beggared first. But never was there a more affecting mixture of feelings. Even the hard-hearted underwriters assembled at Lloyds to hear the news could not stand it: when the death of Nelson was proclaimed, they one and all burst into tears. It is thought that the Londoners will put on mourning without any public orders. The illumination of the public offices last night was splendid, but many private streets were not lighted up at all, so much did sorrow prevail over triumph. The windows, it is said, were broken, and some of the mob

cried out, "What! light up because Nelson is killed?" Nobody can, or ought to pity him, however, for what hero ever died a death more glorious? They say that he saw fifteen ships strike before he fell.

Lucy Aiken to Mrs. Taylor

NELSON'S FUNERAL

STOKE NEWINGTON, *July* 1806.

. . . I have of late been quite stout, and, resolving to enjoy the full privileges of a person in health, I went, on New Year's day, to visit my friend Mrs. Carr, whom I accompanied to some London parties. The most *piquant* of these was a dinner at Hoppner's, where were, besides Hoppner himself, who has more wit than almost any man, "Memory" Rogers, and "Anacreon" Moore, otherwise "Little," who is an Irishman, and told us some Irish stories with infinite humour. In the afternoon came the Opies; presently Mrs. Opie and Moore sat down to the instrument. Mrs. Opie was not in voice, but Anacreon! Upon my word, he gave me new ideas of the power of harmony. He sung us some of his own sweet little songs. set to his own music, and rendered doubly touching by a voice the most sweet, and utterance the most articulate, and expression the most deep and varied, that I ever witnessed. No wonder this little man is a pet with duchesses! What can be better fitted for a plaything of the great than a ruddy, joyous, laughing young Irishman, poor but not humble, a wit, poet, and musician, who is willing to devote his charming talents to their entertainment for the sake of being admitted to their tables, and honoured with their familiarity?

As I was determined to "exert my energies," I readily accompanied my friends on board Mr. W. Carr's ship, whence we saw Nelson's body carried in procession up the river. The ships with their lowered flags, the dark boats of the river fencibles, the magnificent barges of his Majesty, and the City companies, and, above all, the mournful notes of distant music, and the deep sound of the single minute-gun, the smoke of which floated heavily along the surface of the river,—conspired to form a solemn, sober, and appropriate pomp, which I found awfully affecting. It did but increase my eagerness to witness the closing scene of this great pageant exhibited the next day at St. Paul's. Richard, who was our active and attentive squire, will probably have given you an account of our adventures on this occasion, and the order of procession you would see in the papers; but perhaps you might not particularly attend to a circumstance which struck me most forcibly—the union of all ranks, from the heir-apparent to the common sailor, in doing honour to the departed hero. In fact, the royal band of brothers, with their stately figures, splendid uniforms, and sober and majestic deportment, roused, even in me, a transient emotion of loyalty; but when the noble Highlanders and other regiments marched in who vanquished Buonaparte's Invincibles in Egypt, and, reversing their arms, stood hiding their faces with every mark of heartfelt sorrow, and especially when the victorious captains of Trafalgar showed their weather-beaten and undaunted fronts, following the bier in silent, mournful state, and when, at length, the gallant tars appeared bearing in their hands the tattered and blood-stained colours of the *Victory*—and I saw one of the poor fellows wiping his eyes by stealth on the end of the flag

he was holding up—I cannot express to you all the proud, heroic, patriotic feelings that took possession of my heart, and made tears a privilege and luxury. No, on that day an Englishman could not despair of his country! And now, after this taste of the gaieties and glories of the great city, I am returned to my snug little home, which is at present, however, less snug than usual. The Estlins of Bristol are on a visit to the Barbaulds, and we meet almost daily. . . . Miss Edgeworth's "Leonora" is full of wit, observation, and good sense: if it falls in your way it will entertain you much. I will write to Sally [1] at my first leisure interval; but when that will arrive, I cannot guess. Melancholy indeed is the face of public affairs; sometimes it infects me with gloom; but so much more to us is our own fireside than all the world besides, that whilst we see happy faces there, we are half-inclined to say, "Let the world wag!" When I wish to cloak indifference in philosophy, I think how good comes out of evil, and evil out of good, and on the whole how impossible it is to tell which is which. Pray remember me most kindly to the little circle respecting whom I can never be indifferent, including therein Mrs. Enfield, from whom my mother has just had a very affectionate letter, and Eliza. We are all quite well here; my Aunt Barbauld hears as quick as ever. Richard tells me that we are to see his father soon, at which I rejoice not a little, for after all, what pen can convey a tenth part of what *one*, that is *I*, wish to say to my friends? For instance, I have now written almost a pamphlet, and yet I feel as if I had but just got into chat with you. I have scarce left room to say, my best of friends, Adieu.

[1] Miss Sarah Taylor, afterwards Mrs. John Austin.

Lucy Aikin to Edmund Aiken

DINING WITH SCOTT

STOKE NEWINGTON, *May* 9, 1815.

DEAR EDMUND,—I hope you will allow that everybody loves ten times better to receive what you call a gossiping letter than to write one—judge, then, by the size of paper I have taken to fill, how welcome are your epistles to me! . . .

Well! the beginning of last week I was, as I told you, in town. An evening party on Monday at the N——'s, rather too grave and Presbyterian; but to make amends we had an alderman, a person excellent in his way, thinner indeed than alderman beseems (but his wife atones for that), and he had a red face, hair powdered snow-white, and one of those long, foolish noses that look as if they thrust themselves into everything. Then, ye gods! he is musical; summoned Miss N—— to the instrument by touching a few call-notes, and would fain have sung with her, but wicked N—— had left her duets behind, and would not patronise his proposal of taking *two-thirds* of a glee for three voices, so, to my unspeakable mortification, he had no opportunity of exhibiting. . . . Have I got thus far in my letter and said nothing of last Friday! It is a great proof of my methodical and chronological habits of writing that I did not jump to this *period of my history* in the first paragraph. Know, that on Thursday last arrived an invitation from the Carrs to my father and my aunt to dine with them the next day, to meet Walter Scott—apologies at the same time that their table would not admit us all. Well! nothing could persuade my father to go, so my aunt said she would take me instead,

and I had not the grace to say no. A charming day we had. I did not indeed see much of the great lion, for we were fourteen at dinner, of whom about half were constantly talking, and neither at table nor after was I very near him; but he was delighted to see my aunt, and paid her great attention, which I was very glad of. He told her that the "Tramp, tramp," "Splash, splash," of Taylor's "Lenora," which she had carried into Scotland to Dugald Stewart many years ago, was what made him a poet. I heard him tell a story or two with a dry kind of humour, for which he is distinguished; and though he speaks very broad Scotch, he is a heavy-looking man, and has little the air of a gentleman. I was much pleased with him—he is lively, spirited, and quite above all affectation. He had with him his daughter, a girl of fifteen, the most naïve child of nature I ever saw; her little Scotch phrases charmed us all, and her Scotch songs still more. Her father is a happy minstrel to have such a lassie to sing old ballads to him, which she often does by the hour together, for he is not satisfied with a verse or two, but chooses to have *fit* the first, second, and third. He made her sing us a ditty about a Border *reiver* who was to be hanged for stealing the bishop's mare, and who dies with the injunction to his comrades:

> If e'er ye find the bishop's cloak,
> Ye'll mak' it shorter by the hood.

She also sung us a lullaby in Gaelic—very striking novelties both, in a polished London party. Nobody could help calling this charming girl pretty, though all allowed her features were not good, and we thought her not unlike her father's own sweet Ellen. I had the good fortune to be placed at dinner between Mr. Whishaw

and Sotheby, better known by Wieland's "Oberon" than by his own "Saul." He is a lively, pleasant, elderly man; his manners of the old school of gallantry, which we women must ever like. A lady next him asked him if he did not think we could see by Mr. Scott's countenance, if "Waverley" were mentioned, whether he was the author? "I don't know," said Mr.——, "we will try." So he called out from the bottom of the table to the top, "Mr. Scott, I have heard there is a new novel coming out by the author of 'Waverley'; have you heard of it?" "I have," said the minstrel, "and I believe it." He answered very steadily, and everybody cried out directly, "O, I am glad of it!" "Yes," said Mr. Whishaw, "I am a great admirer of these novels"; and we began to discuss which was the best of the two; but Scott kept out of this debate, and had not the assurance to say any handsome things of the works, though *he* is not the author—O no! for he denies them.[1]

Mr. Whishaw was lamenting that his friend Dumont is returning to Geneva; "but he has the *maladie du pays*, like all Swiss. Talleyrand says that to a Genevois Geneva is *la cinquième partie du monde*, and Dumont has a prospect of being Secretary of State, with a salary of £50 per annum. And they do not give cabinet dinners there, but *goûters*." "Of what?" "Peach tart, I suppose." He asked me what was become of that Roscoe who was under Smyth at Cambridge some years ago.—A pretty, romantic young man, and the gods had made him poetical. There were verses to a

1 Of Scott's novels "Waverley," 1814, and "Guy Mannering," 1815, only had been published at this date: he had not yet declared himself as their author; his reputation, therefore rested on his work as a poet and essayist.

lily by moonlight! "O," said I, "he is a steady banker now." "A *steady* banker?" "Yes; there is something of the old character left, certainly, but he is more a man of the world than he was then." "O, of course; a banker is *of the earth, earthly*." I greatly doubt whether *the lion* of the day uttered any roarings equal to these. But the latter part of the evening, our laughing philosopher fell in love with the little Scotch lassie, and only "roared like any sucking dove." . . .

I positively must chatter no longer, I am so busy to-day.

Your affectionate
L. AIKIN.

Lucy Aikin to Edmund Aikin

BATHING AT BRIGHTON

STOKE NEWINGTON, *July* 1815.

I have been longing to hear from you, my dear Edmund, for a great while, but guessed how it was that you deferred writing. At last, by some mistake at home about the time of my return, your letter was sent to Brighton just after I left it; no matter, it reached me safe at last, and I thank you very much for all its contents, particularly the letter to Warwick, of which the P.S. is certainly very curious.

Well, but Brighton!—you will expect to hear about it. I, for my part, care very little if I never hear of it more; it is a most stupid, disagreeable place, but has the advantage of making home quite a paradise in comparison. I saw no person whatever that I knew except Mrs. —— and her family; Mr. —— was only once there, from Saturday night to Monday morning, so

that we were forced to put up with petticoat parties—things which in the long run rather weary me. Nothing, however, could be more friendly than Mrs. ——'s attentions to me, and I greatly enjoyed both my rides and my bathing, for which I am also somewhat the better. The situation of Brighton is certainly far from beautiful—a shingly shore without sands and without rock, except a bald, low, chalk cliff on one side—a sea without ships and land without trees; but it must be confessed that it assembles all imaginable conveniences for summer visitants: lodgings of every kind and price, horses, chaises, gigs, sociables, donkeys, and donkey-carts to hire; excellent shops, libraries, news-rooms, etc. The bathing, however, is not in general very good; they do not often push the machines far enough out to treat you with deep water, and *you*, or rather *we* ladies, have only the alternative of wading in over sharp shingles, and then sitting down to be knocked over and partially wetted by a wave, or to be carried, as I saw a gawky girl, between two bathing-women, head downwards, heels kicking the air, red dirty legs belonging to ditto completely exposed, and the patient shrieking and crying like a pig taken to the slaughter—a mode which had rather too much the appearance of a penal ducking to suit my fancy. Well—but no matter for this now; I am at home and found everybody well; my aunt K—— mending. Glad they were to see me again, for you may believe that without Arthur and us two, the house would seem dull enough to my father and mother. I was also glad not to miss more of Mr. W——'s company, for you know he is a great favourite of mine. . . . To our great joy, in came Mr. Whishaw, and knowing that Mr. W—— wished to see him, we

sent for him. Some time after, my Aunt Barbauld dropped in, and a most agreeable chat we have had. Mr. Whishaw read to us an agreeable letter from Miss Edgeworth, about his "Life of Mungo Park," with a postscript by Mr. E——, who is very ill and seemingly beginning to doat, about the possibility of exploring Africa in balloons, which, he says, he knows the art of guiding—in perfectly calm air. . . .

Mr. W—— says that the Duchess of Cumberland, when she comes over, will probably gain great influence with the Regent, being a very clever, intriguing woman, and that the old Queen will probably be soon out of her way, as she is not likely to live—a hint this for buying mourning!

Good-bye. Don't let it be nearly so long before you write again. My father and mother send their kind love.

Your ever affectionate sister,
L. A.

Lucy Aikin to Edmund Aikin

SEEING QUEEN CHARLOTTE

STOKE NEWINGTON, *November* 1815.

MY DEAR EDMUND,—I am glad of this opportunity to thank you for your letter by H. K., and to tell you how glad we all are that you have got this new job. . . .

Benger has been spending part of two days with us. She is pretty well for one who will never let herself alone, and full of curious anecdote as usual. Charley Wesley, a while ago, took a queer very fat old Mrs. S—— to see the Queen go to the Drawing-room. In

the ante-chamber, in which they waited, were no seats, and the fat lady, becoming tired of standing, at last spread her handkerchief on the floor, and seated herself in a picturesque manner upon it. Charles, being a great blunderer, and somewhat wicked besides, gave the alarm several times that the Queen was coming, and as often poor Mrs. S—— made incredible efforts to get up and see her. At last, he had cried wolf so often that she did not heed him, and when the Queen came indeed she was not able, with the help of all his tugging, to rise from the ground till her Majesty was past; and one end of her hoop was all that blessed the eyes of this loyal and painstaking subject. To complete the misfortune, she was kept waiting for her carriage, owing to Charles's stupidity, till her dinner was spoiled, and the friends she had invited to eat it were quite out of patience; and to mend all, this rare composition of wit and goose tells the whole story as a good joke, mimicking her to admiration. . . .

I ought to tell you that we have had a call from Mr. Rogers, who was very agreeable and entertaining with his accounts of Italy. What a beau King Murat is! The morning Mr. Rogers was presented to him he was standing in the middle of a large room, displaying his fine figure in a Spanish cloak, hat, and feather, yellow boots, pink pantaloons, and a green waistcoat! In the evening he appears in a simpler costume, but still wearing roses on his shoes, a white plume in his hat, and his hair prodigiously curled and frizzed, with a long love-lock hanging down on each side. He does not dress above five times a day. Then, no king in Europe, probably, cuts such high capers in the dance—but for other qualifications for reigning, I hear nothing

of them. Naples is beautiful, says Mr. Rogers, and the Court very gay and pretty; but, after all, Florence is the place one longs to live in. No city of its size has half so many fine domes and towers; then the beautiful Arno meets your eye at every turn, and beyond it the finest woods and distant mountains. His descriptions quite set me longing; such glades of myrtle, such groves of orange-trees, stuck as full of fruit, he says, as the trees you see sometimes painted by a child! . . .

We are all quite well here, and all send love to you.

Your affectionate sister,

L. A.

Lucy Aikin to Edmund Aikin

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD'S DEBUT

Stoke Newington, 1817.

Dear Edmund,—I must give you an anecdote of *lionising* which I have just heard. Mrs. Opie, who is still in London, was holding one of her usual Sunday-morning levees, when up comes her footman, much ruffled, to tell her that a man in a smock frock was below, who wanted to speak to her—would take no denial—could not be got away. Down she goes to investigate the matter. The rustic advances, nothing abashed: "I am James Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd." The poet is had up to the drawing-room, smock frock and all, and introduced to everybody. Presently he pulls out a paper—some verses which he had written that morning and would read, if agreeable. With a horrible Scotch accent, and charity-boy twang, he got through some staves, nobody understanding a line. "Mr. Hogg,"

says Mrs. Opie, "I think, if you will excuse me, I could do more justice to your verses than yourself"; so takes them from him, and with her charming delivery, causes them to be voted very pretty. On enquiring, it is found that the shepherd is on a visit to Lady Cork, the great patroness of lions (see *The Twopenny Post-Bag*); is exhibited, and has doubtless, since his arrival, merited this illustrious protection, by exchanging, for an habiliment so sweetly rustic, the new green coat, pink waistcoat, and fustian small clothes, in which such a worthy would naturally make a début in the great city! As for "Lalla Rookh," it is pretty and very pretty: tender, melodious, and adorned; but my aunt Barbauld says 'tis my flower-dish, sweet and gay, and tastefully arranged, but the flowers do not *grow* there: they are picked up with pains here and there. He has thrown an infinite quantity of oriental allusion into his verse, but the reader sympathises in some degree in the labour of the writer—there is no general interest, no *entraînement*—abundance of sentimental beauty, however, as well as descriptive, some very manly lines on liberty, etc., in the prose some charming banter of reviewers—on the whole, I hope you will read it. My father has finished the writing of his *Annual Register* and is beginning his enlargement of "England Delineated." I cannot persuade him that he works too hard: though we are all sure that it is true.

Good-bye, good-bye: I miss you very much, and so do we all. Never forget that there are those who love and are anxious for you.

Your dearly affectionate,

L. A.

Lucy Aikin to Dr. and Mrs. Aikin

MRS. PIOZZI, ÆT. 79

LAMBRIDGE, *July* 5, 1818.

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—You may believe that I have not neglected to renew my acquaintance with my old friend, Mrs. B. After mutual calls, she invited me to a thing mightily in my line—a concert. I was gratified, however, with some of the music, and glad to find that her eldest girl is regarded as a kind of musical prodigy, to the delight of father and mother. In a corner of the room sat a little thin old lady, muffled up in a black dress, without a bit of white to be seen, with a high, smart head-dress, well rouged cheeks, long nose, and very lively black eyes, whose *picturesque* appearance almost instantly attracted my notice. "Let me introduce you," cried Mrs. B. "to Mrs. Piozzi!" "By all means," exclaimed I, for a hundred associations made me long to talk with the rival of "Bozzy"; and I went and sat by her. Her vivacity has not forsaken her, and I have been at once gratified and tantalised on our return from Bath this morning, to find her card left for me. I hope to find her at home when I return the visit. She is now seventy-nine, and seems as if she might enjoy life a long time yet. . . .

Lucy Aikin to the Rev. Dr. Channing

THE BRITISH MUSEUM IN 1833

ADELPHI, *June* 13, 1833.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—. . . How I long to know whether you are proposing to cross the sea to us! I cannot help thinking it would answer to you in every way. It is

really a new world since you saw England. The progress in many ways has been of unexampled rapidity. You will find London embellished beyond expression. I ramble amongst the new buildings with unceasing admiration, striving in vain to recall the old state of some of the best known streets. We may now boast in the British Museum of a collection to which the world has nothing comparable, and the suite of rooms lately added is worthy of its destination. What adds a moral interest to this assemblage of the treasures of nature and art is the splendid testimony it affords to the public spirit of Englishmen. The gifts of individuals to their country preserved here are almost of inestimable value, even in a commercial view. In France, on the contrary, their museums have been entirely furnished by the purchases or the plunder of the Government. Not even ostentation there moves private persons to make presents to the public. There is another pleasing circumstance. A few years since, access to the Museum was so difficult that it was scarcely visited by twenty persons in a day; now, in compliance with the spirit of the age, it is thrown open to all, and Brougham's *Penny Magazine* has so familiarised all readers with the collection that you see the rooms thronged by thousands, many from the humblest walks of life. I observed common soldiers and "smirched artisans," all quiet, orderly, attentive, and apparently surveying the objects with intelligent curiosity. Depend upon it, there never was a time in which true civilisation was making such strides amongst us. You said very justly, some time ago, that we are only in the beginning of a revolution: the spirit of reform has gone forth, conquering and to conquer: every day it extends its way into new provinces; but

it is, it will continue to be, a peaceful sway, a bloodless conquest. The strongholds of abuse yield, one after another, upon summons. Wellington himself will not be able to bring his "order" into conflict with the majesty of the people. I never looked with so much complacency on the state of my country. I believe her destined to a progress in all that constitutes true glory, which we of this age can but dimly figure to ourselves in the blue distance. The bulk of our people are at length well cured of the long and obstinate delusion respecting the wisdom of our ancestors, which so powerfully served the purposes of the interested oppressors of improvement. Novelties are now tried upon their merits; perhaps even there is some partiality in their favour.

Pray, pray, come and judge of us with your own eyes!

Believe me, ever yours most truly,

L. AIKIN.

Lucy Aikin to the Rev. Dr. Channing

WOMEN AND VOTES

HAMPSTEAD, *October* 14, 1837.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your welcome letter, yesterday received, contains matters which will not suffer me to leave it a day longer unanswered. Well might you be sorry at the tidings that I sympathised in Miss M.'s ideas of the sphere of woman; but if she is in the habit of advancing her opinions on no stronger foundations than she has for this, small must be the proportion of truth in them. The facts are these. I saw her a few days after her book came out, when I had only looked in it for half an hour, and was even ignorant that she

had said anything on the subjects of marriage and divorce, on which I hold her doctrine to be as ignorant, presumptuous, and pernicious as possible. With regard to her notions of the political rights of women, I certainly hold, and it appears to me self-evident that, on the principle that there should never be taxation without representation, women who possess independent property *ought* to vote; but this is more the American than the English principle. Here it is, or was, rather, the doctrine that the elective franchise is a trust given to some for the good of the whole; and on that ground I think the claim of women might be dubious. Yet the Reform Bill, by affixing the elective franchise only, and in all cases, to the possession of land, or occupancy of houses of a certain value, tends to suggest the idea that a single woman possessing such property as unrestrictedly as a man, subject to the same taxes, liable even to some burdensome, though eligible to no honourable or profitable, parish offices, ought in equity to have, and might have without harm or danger, a suffrage to give. I vote for guardians of the poor of this parish by merely signing a paper, why might I not vote thus for members of Parliament? As to the scheme of opening to women professions and trades, now exercised only by men, I am totally against it, for more reasons than I have time to give.

Lucy Aiken to the Rev. Dr. Channing

THE INEQUALITY OF MAN

HAMPSTEAD, *April* 18, 1838.

. . . I really am totally unable to understand your faith in the coming of a time when all men will be

regarded by all as equals. Such a time can plainly not come without community of goods, and to that I see no tendency; nor can it arrive whilst any division of labour exists. As long as one man works only with his hands, and another with his head, there will be inequality between them of the least conventional kind: inequality in knowledge, in the objects of thought, in the estimate of existence, and of all that makes it desirable. Among the rudest savages there has always been inequality, produced by that nature itself which gives to one man more strength and more understanding than another; and all the refinements of social life open fresh sources of inequality. Even in a herd of wild cattle there is inequality, produced by differences of age, and sex, and size; and what imaginable power or process can ever bring human creatures to a parity? As little can I see how such a state would be the practical assertion of the preference due to the "inward over the outward," to "humanity over its accidents." Are not many of these sources of inequality really inward? Are not the accidents inseparable from humanity? The things which elevate man above his fellows are all *powers* of one kind or other; wealth is a power, since it can purchase gratifications and services; birth is a power, where the laws have made it the condition of enjoying privileges or authority; where they have not done so, it speedily sinks into contempt. Genius is a power; weight of moral character is a power; beauty is a power; knowledge is a power. The possessor of any of these goes with his talent to the market of life, and obtains with it or for it what others think it worth their while to give—some more, some less. Can or ought this to be otherwise? The precious gifts of nature

must be valued so long as humanity is what it is; the results of application, of exertion, mental, bodily, cannot cease to bear their price without deadening all the active principles in man. I see, indeed, a tendency in high civilisation to break down in some degree the ancient barriers between class and class, by opening new roads to wealth, to fame, and to social distinction. Watt and Davy, Reynolds and Flaxman, could not safely be treated with disdain either by Howards and Mowbrays, or by the "millionaires" of commerce; but this does not assist those who have nothing to rest upon but mere human nature itself. These may be equal to their more privileged brethren before God; they may, and ought to be, equal in the eye of the law, but socially equal—I do not see the possibility. You approve the aristocracy of wealth so far as it tends to break in upon that of rank, and to mix all classes—but how far would you carry this mixture? Shall I begin tea-drinkings with my maudlin washerwoman? Will you invite to your table the bow-legged snip who made your coat? How soon, alas! at this rate would the rivulet of refinement be swallowed up in the ocean of vulgarity! What models would remain of manners, of language, of taste in literature or the arts! What a mere work-a-day world would this become! The coarse themselves would grow coarser, and in the end sensuality would rise victorious over all.

The opinions in which all could agree must be absurd and extravagant ones, for, as Locke observes, "truth and reason did never yet carry it by the majority anywhere." The talk in which all can join is seldom such as any one is much better for hearing. If it be true that "there is no man of merit but hath a touch of

singularity, and scorns something," surely merit must always be allowed to scorn ignorance, or grossness incapable of estimating it; and this cannot but include a kind of disdain of the society of the lower classes. Pray answer me all this, for I think I must have misapprehended your idea.

ANN GODWIN (d. 1809)

BEFORE her marriage with Mr. Godwin, a dissenting minister, was a Miss Hull. Of her th rteen children, William Godwin the philosopher, the husband of Mary Wollstonecraft and father-in-law of Shelley, alone became famous. Mrs. Godwin's letters are curious and homely examples of the letters of an anxious mother and careful housewife.

To William Godwin[1]

FAMILY NEWS

February 6, 1800.

DEAR WM.,—I should be glad to hear a good account of Joseph. I doubt much his amendment it is not the first time he has overcome you with fine words. He seems according to what I can learn to be poorer for y^e^ £44 I have given him than he was before he had it, he can't neither board nor clothe Harriot. I hear she is gone to service somewhere in the country. Well, she had better begin low than be puff[1] up with pride now and afterwards become low, for she had certainly no

[1] The two following letters by Ann Godwin are reprinted by kind permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., from Mr. C. Kegan Paul's "Life of William Godwin."

good examples at home. I heard once she was in expectation of being sent to her Aunt Barker's, but what barbarity is it not to let her have shoes to her feet when she came to your sister's. I am glad she did not go where her education would have been as bad as at home. London is the place where girls go too for services to get better wages than they can in the country, but I know the reason is her is given up to pride and sensuality and well know where y^t^ will lead to and all that tread in the same steps. I hoped, tho' it was not likely, to have done him good and your sister too but I find I am mistaken. We in the country deny ourselves because of y^e^ dearness of provisions, make meal dumplings, meal crusts to pies mix'd with boil'd rice and a very little butter in them, our bread meal and rice which we have bou^t^ at twopence per pound, and very good it is, pancakes w^th^ boil'd rice in water till tender and very little milk or egg with flower, we have had a very favourable winter hitherto, only one sharp frost one fortnight. Did you pay Mary Bailey £5 or not, has her father done anything for them, how do they go on, what is their direction ? Is J. Jex steady and give content in his situation ? I wish him to learn his business stay his time. I hope he is bound till 21 years of age I hope y^r^ brother John will take a prudent care. I cannot promise for Natty he wishes to be in business for himself and to marry. He has made one attempt but she was pre-engaged and I don't know another in the world I should like so well, so most likely he must remain a servant all his days. Providence ought to be submitted to, 'tis but a little while we have to live here in comparison of Eternity and wedlock is attended with many cares and fears. I am not well very few days together tho' I

keep about. My great complaint is a bad dijestion. I desire to resign myself to y^e^ almighty will in everything my life to me is now a burthen rather than a pleasure. I wish you the truest happiness I don't mean what y^e^ world calls happiness for that's of short duration, but a prospect of that happiness that will never fade away.

From your affectionate mother,

A. GODWIN.

Ann Godwin, to William Godwin

SITTING UNDER MR. SYKES

November 15, 1803.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,—Whose countenance gave me the highest delight to see with your wife, whom I also respect for her many amiable qualities. I wish you had paid so much respect to good Mr. Sykes as to have heard him preach one Lord's Day in your good father's Pulpit. Think with yourself, if you were in his place, and your mother's that loves you, and at the same time highly values Mr. Sykes, who in many respects is the very Image of your dear father, for friendliness and wish to do everybody good. A man of unblemished carrector and serious godliness. He told me he was ingaged before he received my invitation to spend the afternoon, which I was sorry for, for he is so sensible a man, that you could not but been pleased with his company. It now remains to tell you and Mrs. Godwin I have done the best I ever could about the sheets, and think them a very great pennyworth. I desired Hannah to cut off lines of her letter, and send them to you how to remit the money—£4 4*s.*—for the sheets, and one

shilling for the pack cloth, which makes £4 5s. Pay it into Barklay's bank taking his receipt on your letter for Ann Godwin sen.'s account at Guirneys Bank Norwich. They will do it without putting you to the expence of a stamp. Leave room to cut it off, that I may send it.

Mrs. Godwins kind letter I rec'd ; was rejoiced you got safe home, and met your dear children in good helth, and the particulars of your journey. The time we spent together was to me very pleasing, to see you both in such helth and so happy in consulting to make each other so, which is beutiful, in a married state, and, as far as I am able to judge, appears husifly [1] which is a high recommendation in a wife : give her the fruit of her hands, and let her own hands praise her. I might go back to the 10th verse. But will conclude with, favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the lord, she shall be praised.

I wish your brother John had ever so mean a place where he had his board found, if it were Mr. Finche's footman's for he must actually starve on half a guinea a week. If his master will give him a carrector. I have sent him 7 lb. of butter, but that can't last long and I am in earnest. If he don't seek a place while he has deasent clothes on his back, nobody will take him in. I cannot nor I will not, support him. I shall not be ashamed to own him, let him be in ever so low a station, if he have an honest carrector. He is two old to go to sea, but may do for such a place if his pride will let him : its better than a jale, and I can't pretend to keep him out. Now I have another melancholy story to tell you. Your dear brother Natty, I fear, is declining apace. He is still at Mr. Murton's, but I have invited him home to

[1] Housewifely.

do what I can for him. If my maid cannot nurse him he must have one. Tell Hannah Mr. Hull's brother Raven seems declining too, may perhaps live the winter out, but has no appetite, nor keep out of bed half the day. You see Deth is taking his rounds, and the young as well as the old are not sure of a day. The Lord grant that we may finish our warfare, so as not to be afraid to die.

Now I will tell you Mr. Sykes's text last Lord's Day—Isaiah liv., "O thou afflicted and tossed with tempess, behold I will lay thy stones with fare coulars, and lay thy foundations with sapphires"—one of the finest sermons I ever heard. I wish you to read Henery's exposition on that chapter.

I am unwell with a cold. I've not been so well since you left us. I believe I did myself no good with such long walks, but have not missed a meeting since. Mr. and Mrs. G. send their respects to you, and so do their children and my maid Molly.

I would advise you to let your children learn to knit little worsted short stockens, just above their shoes, to keep their feet from chillblains this winter. We cannot but be anxious about this war. It was pride that begun it, and will most likely ruin it. Cursed pride that creeps securely in, and swels a haughty wurm. It was the sin that cast the divils out of heaven, and our first parents out of Paradise.—I am, with real affection, your loving mother,

ANN GODWIN.

I have sent you two pocket handkerchifs, a pair course stockens for your brother, the rest for my Grandson John.

JANE TAYLOR (1783-1824)

A DAUGHTER of Isaac Taylor, an engraver, and pastor of an Independent Congregation. Jane Taylor and her sister Anne (afterwards Mrs. Gilbert) when about thirteen assisted their father in his business. In 1798 they contributed to an Annual, and from that date rapidly produced volumes of Poems and Hymns for children. Jane also wrote tales and essays, but her "Original Poems" for children attained extraordinary popularity and even at the present day are the chief favourites of little people.

Jane Taylor to Miss S. L. C.

TIME AND TEMPERAMENT

COLCHESTER, *February* 12, 1806.

. . . In truth Jane Taylor of the morning, and Jane Taylor of the evening, are as different people, in their feelings and sentiments, as two such intimate friends can possibly be. The former is an active, handy little body, who can make beds or do plain work, and now and then takes fancy for drawing, etc. But the last mentioned lady never troubles her head with these menial affairs; nothing will suit her but the pen; and though she does nothing very extraordinary in this way, yet she so far surpasses the first-named gentlewoman, that any one who had ever received a letter from both, would immediately distinguish between the two, by the difference of style. But to drop this ingenious allegory, I assure you it represents the truth, and I am pretty well determined not again to attempt letter-writting before breakfast. For really I am a mere machine—the most

stupid and dronish creature you can imagine, at this time. The unsentimental realities of breakfast may claim some merit in restoring my mental faculties; but its effects are far surpassed by the evening's tea:—after that comfortable, social, invigorating meal, I am myself, and begin to think the world a pleasanter place, and my friends more agreeable people, and (*entre nous*) myself a much more respectable personage, than they have seemed during the day: so that by eight o'clock I am just worked up to a proper state of mind for writing. If you are liable to these changing frames, you will not only excuse and feel for me, but heartily acquiesce in my resolution of now putting down the pen till the evening.

It is now indeed evening, and several days have passed since I wrote the foregoing; and I do assure you that nothing but the fear of being unable to fill another sheet in time for my father's departure should prevail with me to send you so much nonsense. I often reproach myself for writing such trifling letters; but it is so *easy* to trifle, and so hard to write what may be worth reading, that it is a sad temptation not to attempt it. . . .

Jane Taylor to Miss S. L. C.

THE CULTURED HOUSE-WIFE

COLCHESTER, *June* 2, 1808.

. . . We have already had some delightful evening rambles. When we are all out together on these happy occasions I forget all my troubles, and feel as light-hearted as I can remember I used to do some seven

or eight years ago, when I scarcely knew what was meant by depression. If I should ever lose my relish for these simple pleasures—if I thought by growing older, my feelings would no longer be alive to them, I should be ready indeed to cling to youth, and petition old Time to take a little rest, instead of working so indefatigably, night and day, upon me. But alas! he is such a persevering old fellow, that nothing can hinder him: one must needs admire his industry, even though one may now and then be a little provoked with obstinacy. But, seriously, it is not right to shrink from age, much less from maturity; and could I be sure of retaining some of my present ideas, feelings, and sentiments, and of parting only with those that are vain and childish, I think I could welcome its near approach with a tolerably good grace. But I dread finding a chilling indifference steal gradually upon me, for some of those pursuits and pleasures which have hitherto been most dear to me—an indifference which I think I have observed in some of the meridian of life. I am always, therefore, delighted to discover in people of advancing years any symptoms of their being still susceptible of such enjoyments; and in this view, the letters of Mrs. Grant afforded me peculiar gratification: increasing years seem to have deprived her of no rational enjoyment. If time clipped a little the wings of her fancy, she was still able to soar above the common pleasures of a mere housewife—no reflection, by the by, upon that respectable character; believe me, I reverence it; and always regard with respect a woman who performs her difficult, complicated, and important duties with address and propriety. Yet I see no reason why the best housewife in the world should take more pleasure in making a curious pudding

than in reading a fine poem ; or feel a greater pride in setting out an elegant table than in producing a well-trained child. I perfectly glory in the undeniable example Mrs. Grant exhibits of a woman filling up all the duties of her domestic stations with peculiar activity and success, and at the same time cultivating the minds of her children usefully and elegantly ; and still allowing herself to indulge occasionally in the most truly rational of all pleasures—the pleasures of intellect.

I daresay you read a paper in *The Christian Observer* for April on Female Cultivation. I feel grateful to the sensible and liberally minded author. I do believe the reason why so few men, even among the intelligent, wish to encourage the mental cultivation of women, is their excessive love of the *good things* of this life ; they tremble for their dear stomachs, concluding that a woman who could taste the pleasures of poetry or sentiment would never descend to pay due attention to those exquisite flavours in pudding or pie, that are so gratifying to their philosophic palates ; and yet, poor gentlemen, it is a thousand pities they should be so much mistaken ; for, after all, who so much as a woman of sense and cultivation will feel the real importance of her domestic duties ; or who so well, so cheerfully perform them. . . .

MARY LAMB (1764-1847)

THE devoted and only sister of Charles Lamb. She wrote the comedies for the " Tales from Shakespeare." This popular book was followed by " Mrs. Leicester's School," and much of the " Poetry for Children." Mary Lamb never left her brother except when compelled to do so on account

of her health; she survived him thirteen years, and was buried by his side. The following letters show that she possessed some of her brother's quaint humour.

Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddard (Mrs. William Hazlitt) [1]

MARY LAMB'S GOSSIP

May 14, 1806.

My dear Sarah,—No intention of forfeiting my promise, but mere want of time has prevented me from continuing my *Journal*. You seem pleased with the long, stupid one I sent, and, therefore, I shall certainly continue to write at every opportunity. The reason why I have not had any time to spare, is because Charles has given himself some hollidays after the hard labour of finishing his farce, and, therefore, I have had none of the evening leisure I promised myself. Next week he promises to go to work again. I wish he may happen to hit upon some new plan, to his mind, for another farce: when once begun I do not fear his perseverance, but the hollidays he has allowed himself, I fear, will unsettle him. I look forward to next week with the same kind of anxiety I did to the first entrance at the new lodging. We have had, as you know, so many teasing anxieties of late, that I have got a kind of habit of foreboding that we shall never be comfortable, and that he will never settle to work; which I know is wrong, and which I will try with all my might to overcome—for certainly, if I could but see things as they really are, our prospects are considerably improved since

[1] The following letters of Mary Lamb are printed by kind permission of Mr. W. C. Hazlitt.

the memorable day of Mrs. Fenwick's last visit. I have heard nothing of that good lady, or of the Fells, since you left us.

We have been visiting a little—to Noriss's, to Godwin's; and last night we did not come home from Captain Burney's till two o'clock: the *Saturday night* was changed to *Friday*, because Rickman could not be there to-night. We had the best *tea things*, and the litter all cleared away, and everything as handsome as possible—Mrs. Rickman being of the party. Mrs. Rickman is much *increased in size* since we saw her last, and the alteration in her strait shape wonderfully improves her. Phillips was there, and Charles had a long batch of Cribbage with him: and, upon the whole, we had the most cheerful evening I have known there a long time. To-morrow we dine at Holcroft's. These things rather fatigue me; but I look for a quiet week next week, and hope for better times. We have had Mrs. Brooks and all the Martins, and we have likewise been there; so that I seem to have been in a continual bustle lately. I do not think Charles cares so much for the Martins as he did, which is a fact you will be glad to hear—though you must not name them when you write: always remember, when I tell you any thing about them, not to mention their names in return.

We have had a letter from your brother by the same mail as yours I suppose; he says he does not mean to return till summer, and that is all he says about himself; his letter being entirely filled with a long story about Lord Nelson—but nothing more than what the newspapers have been full of, such as his last words, etc. Why does he tease you with so much *good advice;* is it merely to fill up his letters, as he filled ours, with

Lord Nelson's exploits ? or has any new thing come out against you ? has he discovered Mr. Curse-a-rat's correspondence ? I hope you will not write to that *news-sending* gentleman any more. I promised never more to give my *advice*, but one may be allowed to *hope* a little ; and I also hope you will have something to tell me soon about Mr. W[hite] : have you seen him yet ? I am sorry to hear your Mother is not better, but I am in a hoping humour just now, and I cannot help hoping that we shall all see happier days. The bells are just now ringing for the taking of the *Cape of Good Hope*.

I have written to Mrs. Coleridge to tell her that her husband is at Naples ; your brother slightly named his being there, but he did not say that he had heard from him himself. Charles is very busy at the office ; he will be kept there to-day till seven or eight o'clock : and he came home very *smoky and drinky* last night ; so that I am afraid that a hard day's work will not agree very well with him.

Oh dear ! What shall I say next ? Why this I will say next, that I wish you was with me ; I have been eating a mutton chop all alone, and I have been just looking in the pint porter pot, which I find quite empty, and yet I am still very dry. If you was with me, we would have a glass of brandy-and-water ; but it is quite impossible to drink brandy-and-water by oneself ; therefore I must wait with patience till the kettle boils. I hate to drink tea alone, it is worse than dining alone. We have got a fresh cargo of biscuits from Captain Burney's. I have——March [May] 14.—Here I was interrupted ; and a long, tedious interval has intervened, during which I have had neither time nor inclination to write a word. The Lodging—that pride and pleasure

of your heart and mine, is given up, *and here he is again*, Charles, I mean—as unsettled and as undetermined as ever. When he went to the poor lodging, after the hollidays I told you he had taken, he could not endure the solitariness of them, and I had no rest for the sole of my foot till I promised to believe his solemn protestations that he could and would write as well at home as there. Do you believe this?

I have no power over Charles—he will do—what he will do. But I ought to have some little influence over myself. And therefore I am most manfully resolving to turn over a new leaf with my own mind. Your visit to us, though not a very comfortable one to yourself, has been of great use to me. I set you up in my fancy as a kind of *thing* that takes an interest in my concerns; and I hear you talking to me and arguing the matters very learnedly, when I give way to despondency. You shall hear a good account of me, and the progress I make in altering my fretful temper to a calm and quiet one. It is but being once thorowly convinced one is wrong, to make one resolve to do so no more; and I know my dismal faces have been almost as great a drawback upon Charles's comfort as his feverish, teazing ways have been upon mine. Our love for each other has been the torment of our lives hitherto. I am most seriously intending to bend the whole force of my mind to counteract this, and I think I see some prospect of success.

Of Charles ever bringing any work to pass at home, I am very doubtful; and of the farce succeeding, I have little or no hope; but if I could once get into the way of being chearful myself, I should see an easy remedy in leaving town and living cheaply, almost wholly

alone ; but till I do find we really are comfortable alone, and by ourselves, it seems a dangerous experiment. We shall certainly stay where we are, till after next Christmas ; and in the meantime, as I told you before, all my whole thoughts shall be to *change* myself into just such a chearful soul as you would be in a lone house, with no companion but your brother, if you had nothing to vex you—nor no means of wandering after *Curse-a-rats*.

Do write soon : though I write all about myself, I am thinking all the while of you, and I am uneasy at the length of time it seems since I heard from you. Your Mother, and Mr. White, is running continually in my head ; and this *second winter* makes me think how cold, damp, and forlorn your solitary house will feel to you. I would your feet were perched up again on our fender.

Manning is not yet gone. Mrs. Holcroft is brought to bed. Mrs. Reynolds has been confined at home with illness, but is recovering. God bless you.

Yours affectionately,
M. Lamb.

Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart

"TALES FROM SHAKESPEARE"

June 2, 1806.

My dear Sarah,—You say truly that I have sent you too many make-believe letters. I do not mean to serve you so again, if I can help it. I have been very ill for some days past with the toothache. Yesterday I had it drawn ; and I feel myself greatly relieved, but far from easy, for my head and my jaws still ache ; and, being unable to do any business, I would wish to write you a

long letter to atone for my former offences ; but I feel so languid, that I am afraid wishing is all I can do.

I am sorry you are so worried with business ; and I am still more sorry for your sprained ancle. You ought not to walk upon it. What is the matter between you and your good-natured maid you used to boast of ? and what the devil is the matter with your Aunt ? You say she is discontented. You must bear with them as well as you can ; for, doubtless, it is your poor mother's teazing that puts you all out of sorts. I pity you from my heart.

We cannot come to see you this summer, nor do I think it advisable to come and incommode you, when you for the same expense could come to us. Whenever you feel yourself disposed to run away from your troubles come up to us again. I wish it was not such a long expensive journey, then you could run backwards and forwards every month or two.

I am very sorry you still hear nothing from Mr. White. I am afraid that is all at an end. What do you intend to do about Mr. Turner ?

I believe Mr. Rickman is well again, but I have not been able to get out lately to enquire, because of my toothache. Louisa Martin is quite well again.

William Hazlitt, the brother of him you know, is in town. I believe you have heard us say we like him ? He came in good time ; for the loss of Manning made Charles very dull, and he likes Hazlitt better than anybody except Manning. My toothache has moped Charles to death : You know how he hates to see people ill.

Mrs. Reynolds has been this month past at Deptford,

so that I never know when Monday comes. I am glad you have got your mother's pension.

My *Tales* are to be published in separate story-books ; I mean, in single stories, like the children's little shilling books. I cannot send you them in manuscript, because they are all in the Godwins' hands ; but one will be published very soon, and then you shall have it *all in print.* I go on very well, and have no doubt but I shall always be able to hit upon some such kind of job to keep going on. I think I shall get fifty pounds a year at the lowest calculation ; but as I have not yet seen any *money* of my own earning, for we do not expect to be paid till Christmas, I do not feel the good fortune, that had so unexpectedly befallen me, half so much as I ought to do. But another year, no doubt, I shall perceive it.

When I write again, you will hear tidings of the farce, for Charles is to go in a few days to the Managers to enquire about it. But that must now be a next-year's business too, even if it does succeed ; so it's all looking forward and no prospect of present gain. But that's better than no hopes at all, either for present or future times.

Charles has written Macbeth, Othello, King Lear, and has begun Hamlet ; you would like to see us, as we often sit writing on one table (but not on one cushion sitting) like Hermia and Helena in the *Midsummers' Night's Dream* ; or rather, like an old literary Darby and Joan : I taking snuff, and he groaning all the while, and saying he can make nothing of it, which he always says till he has finished, and then he finds out he has made something of it.

If I tell you that, you Widow-Blackacreise, you must

tell me I Tale-ise, for my *Tales* seem to be all the subject-matter I write about ; and when you see them, you will think them poor little baby-stories to make such a talk about ; but I have no news to send, nor nothing, in short, to say, that is worth paying twopence for. I wish I could get franks, then I should not care how short or stupidly I wrote.

Charles smokes still, and will smoke to the end of the chapter.

Martin Burney has just been here. My Tales (*again*) and Charles's Farce has made the boy mad to turn Author ; and he has written a Farce, and he has made the *Winter's Tale* into a story ; but what Charles says of himself is really true of Martin, for *he can make nothing at all of it :* and I have been talking very eloquently this morning, to convince him that nobody can write farces, etc. under thirty years of age. And so I suppose he will go home and new-model his farce.

What is Mr. Turner ? and what is likely to come of him ? and how do you like him ? and what do you intend to do about it ? I almost wish you to remain single till your mother dies, and then come and live with us ; and we would either get you a husband or teach you how to live comfortably without. I think I should like to have you always to the end of our lives living with us ; and I do not know any reason why that should not be, except for the great fancy you seem to have for marrying, which after all is but a hazardous kind of an affair : but, however, do as you like ; every man knows best what pleases himself best.

I have known many single men I should have liked in my life (if it had suited them) for a husband : but very few husbands have I ever wished was mine, which is

rather against the state in general; but one never is disposed to envy wives their good husbands. So much for marrying—but, however, get married, if you can.

I say we shall not come and see you, and I feel sure we shall not: but, if some sudden freak was to come into our wayward heads, could you at all manage?--your mother we should not mind, but I think still it would be so vastly inconvenient. I am certain we shall not come, and yet you may tell me, when you write, if it would be horribly inconvenient if we did; and do not tell me any lies, but say truly whether you would rather we did or not.

God bless you, my dearest Sarah! I wish for your sake I could have written a very amusing letter; but do not scold, for my head aches sadly. Don't mind my headache, for before you get this it will be well, being only from the pains of my jaws and teeth. Farwel.

Yours affectionately,

M. Lamb.

Mary Lamb to Miss Barbara Betham

CHARLES LAMB AND HIS STUDY

November 2, 1814.

It is very long since I have met with such an agreeable surprise as the sight of your letter, my kind young friend, afforded me. Such a nice letter as it is too. And what a pretty hand you write. I congratulate you on this attainment with great pleasure, because I have so often felt the disadvantage of my own wretched handwriting.

You wish for London news. I rely upon Sister Ann

for gratifying you in this respect, yet I have been endeavouring to recollect whom you might have seen here, and what may have happened to them since, and this effort has only brought the image of little Barbara Betham, unconnected with any other person, so strongly before my eyes that I seem as if I had no other subject to write upon. Now I think I see you with your feet propped up on the fender, your two hands spread out upon your knees—an attitude you always chose when we were in familiar confidential conversation together —telling me long stories of your own home, where now you say you are "moping on with the same thing every day," and which then presented nothing but pleasant recollections to your mind. How well I remember your quiet steady face bent over your book. One day, conscience-struck at having wasted so much of your precious time in readings, and feeling yourself, as you prettily said "quite useless to me," you went to my drawers and hunted out some unhemmed pocket-handkerchiefs, and by no means could I prevail upon you to resume your story books till you had hemmed them all. I remember, too, your teaching my little maid to read—your sitting with her a whole evening to console her for the death of her sister; and that she in her turn endeavoured to become a comfort to you the next evening when you wept at the sight of Mrs. Holecroft, from whose school you had recently eloped because you were not partial to sitting in the stocks. Those tears, and a few you once dropped when my brother teased you about your supposed fondness for apple dumplings, were the only interruptions to the calm contentedness of your unclouded brow. We still remain the same as you left us, neither better nor wiser,

nor perceptibly older, but three years must have made a great alteration in you. How very much, dear Barbara, I should like to see you!

We still live in Temple Lane, but I am not sitting in a room you never saw. Soon after you left us we were distressed by the cries of a cat, which seemed to proceed from the garrets adjoining to ours, and only separated from ours by the locked door on the farther side of my brother's bedroom, which you know was the little room at the top of the kitchen stairs. We had the lock forced and let poor puss out from behind a panel of the wainscot, and she lived with us from that time, for we were in gratitude bound to keep her, as she had introduced us to four untenanted unowned rooms, and by degrees we have taken possession of these unclaimed apartments—first putting up lines to dry our clothes, then moving my brother's bed into one of these, more commodious than his own room. And last winter, my brother being unable to pursue a work he had begun, owing to the kind interruptions of friends who were more at leisure than himself, I persuaded him that he might write at his ease in one of these rooms, as he could not then hear the door knock, or hear himself denied to be at home, which was sure to make him call out and convict the poor maid in a fib. Here, I said, he might be almost really not at home. So I put in an old grate, and made him a fire in the largest of these garrets, and carried in one table and one chair, and bid him write away, and consider himself as much alone as if he were in some lodging on the midst of Salisbury Plain, or any other wide unfrequented place where he could expect few visitors to break in upon his solitude. I left him quite delighted

with his new acquisition, but in a few hours he came down again with a sadly dismal face. He could do nothing, he said, with those bare whitewashed walls before his eyes. He could not write in that dull unfurnished prison.

The next day, before he came home from his office, I had gathered up various bits of old carpeting to cover the floor; and, to a little break the blank look of the bare walls, I hung up a few old prints that used to ornament the kitchen, and after dinner, with great boast of what an improvement I had made, I took Charles once more into his new study. A week of busy labour followed, in which I think you would not have disliked to have been our assistant. My brother and I almost covered the walls with prints, for which purpose he cut out every print from every book in his old library, coming in every now and then to ask my leave to strip a fresh poor author—which he might not do, you know, without my permission, as I am elder sister. There was such pasting, such consultation where their portraits, and where a series of pictures from Ovid, Milton, and Shakespeare would show to most advantage, and in what obscure corner authors of humbler note might be allowed to tell their stories. All the books gave up their stories but one—a translation from Ariosto—a delicious set of four-and-twenty prints, and for which I had marked out a conspicuous place; when lo! we found at the moment the scissors were going to work that a part of the poem was printed at the back of every picture. What a cruel disappointment! To conclude this long story about nothing, the poor despised garret is now called the print-room, and is become our most favourite sitting-room. Your sister Anne will

tell you that your friend Louisa is going to France. Miss Skipper is out of town ; Mrs. Reynolds desires to be remembered to you, and so does my neighbour Mrs. Norris, who was your doctress when you were unwell. Her three little children have grown three big children. The lions still line Exeter 'Change. Returning home through the Strand, I often hear them roar about twelve o'clock at night. I never hear them without thinking of you, because you seemed so pleased with the sight of them, and said your young companions would stare when you told them you had seen a lion. And now, my dear Barbara, farewell ; I have not written such a long letter a long time, but I am very sorry I had nothing amusing to write about. Wishing you may pass happily through the rest of your school days, and every day of your life,

I remain, your affectionate friend,

M. LAMB.

My brother sends his love to you [and was as much pleased] with the kind remembrance your letter shewed you have of us as I was. He joins with me in respects to your good father and mother. Now you have begun, I shall hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you again. I shall always receive a letter from you with very great delight.

ANGELICA KAUFFMANN, R.A. (1741-1807)

THE famous painter, was one of the first Royal Academicians. She was talented, beautiful, and a musician, and is said to have cherished a romantic regard for Sir Joshua Reynolds. Lady Ritchie has made her the heroine of her story, "Miss Angel." Miss Kauffmann was twice married and died in Rome.

To a Friend

RUINS AT TIVOLI

ROME, *June 7*, 1806.

. . . My kindest and warmest thanks have this time been longer delayed on account of a little excursion made in the country. I passed near three weeks in Tivoli, about twenty miles from Rome; a charming place, so much sung and praised by Horace, where he had his villa—of which however little or nothing remains—more is yet to be seen of the villa of Mecænas—and the villa Adriana—and some others—but destructive time has reduced all to the pleasure of imagination—perhaps a melancholy pleasure, to see only some poor remains of the greatest magnificence. Oh that you, my worthy friend, could see this place, or that I could once more have the happiness to see you in dear England, to which my heart is so much attached, and where I should once more see you, my worthy friend, with the greatest joy. Too happy should I think myself to be myself the bearer of the picture I had the pleasure of executing for you. In peaceable times it would not, perhaps, have been amongst the impossible things. Could I, however, find in the meantime a safe opportunity to get it conveyed to you, I should certainly not lose it, as I long you should have at least this small token of my gratitude for the many and numberless obligations, for all the favours you continue to bestow upon me. It makes me very happy to know that you and all your relations are well: be so kind as to remember me to them in the most respectful manner. I conclude this returning you my most grateful thanks. I beg for the continuance of

your friendship: and have the honour to be, with the greatest esteem and gratitude,

Your most obliged humble servant and friend,

ANGELICA KAUFFMANN.

Angelica Kauffmann, R.A., to a Friend

A HOLIDAY LETTER

ALBANO, *September* 20, 1806.

Before this reaches your hands Mr. B——, to whom I wrote the beginning of this month, I hope, according to my request, has informed you that I have, in due time, received your obliging favour. . . . I find myself in this delightful place since the 20th of August last. This change of air was necessary for the better restoration of my health, which has so much suffered by the long-lasting rheumatic pains I suffered in my breast; but now, thank God! this air has been so beneficial to me, that all my complaints are vanished, and my spirits recovered.

I hope this will find you and all those that are dear to you in perfect health: remember me to them *most affectionately*. All hopes of peace, I fear, are vanished. I am sorry for it, for *many reasons*. The picture was and is ready for exportation. I shall remain in this place all this month, if the weather continues good, and perhaps part of the next. The situation is beautiful; but we are now and then visited with some shocks of earthquake, which have done considerable damage, in most of the neighbouring places; here they were not very sensible. Thank God! I should have been much alarmed.

Pardon me for being thus tedious to you. I conclude, repeating my sincerest, kindest, and warmest thanks to you for all your kindness, for all the attention you have for me, which I do not know how to deserve. Nor have I words to express the sincere attachment with which I am, and shall be as long as I exist,

Your truly obliged, humble servant and
most affectionate friend,
ANGELICA KAUFFMANN.

DOROTHY WORDSWORTH (1771–1855)

ONLY sister of the poet William Wordsworth. In her journal can be traced some of the germs which were developed by her brother into some of his most exquisite poetry such as his *Daffodils*. Wordsworth once said of her "She gave me eyes, she gave me ears." In 1832 she had a severe illness, from which she never entirely recovered.

To Lady Beaumont [1]

NAMING THE BABY

GRASMERE, *Tuesday Evening, June* 17 [1806].

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You will rejoice with us in my sister's safety, and the birth of a son. There was something peculiarly affecting to us in the time and manner

1 The following letters of Dorothy Wordsworth are reprinted by kind permission of Professor William Knight, from his editions of the Correspondence of the Wordsworth family, published in the U.S.A.

of this child's coming into the world. It was like the very same thing over again which happened three years ago; for on the 18th of June, on such another morning, after such a clear and starlight night, the birds singing in the orchard in full assembly as on this 15th, the young swallows chirping in the self-same nest at the chamber window, the rose-trees rich with roses in the garden, the sun shining on the mountains, the air still and balmy—on such a morning was Johnny born, and all our first feelings were revived at the birth of his brother two hours later in the day, and three days earlier in the month; and I fancied that I felt a double rushing-in of love for it, when I saw the child, as if I had both what had been the first-born infant John's share of love to give it, and its own. We said it was to be called William at first, but we have since had many discussions and doubts about the name; and Southey, who was here this morning, is decided against William; he would keep the father's name distinct, and not have two *William Wordsworths*. It never struck us in this way; but we have another objection which does not go beyond our own household and our own particular friends, *i.e.* that my brother is always called William amongst us, and it will create great confusion, and we cannot endure the notion of giving up the sound of a name, which, applied to him, is so dear to us. In the case of Dorothy there is often much confusion; but it is not so bad as it would be in this case, and besides, if it were only equally confusing, the inconvenience would be doubled. Your kind letter to my brother arrived yesterday, with your sister's most interesting account of her sensations on ascending the Mont Denvers.[1] I shuddered while I

read; and though admiration of the fortitude with which she endured the agony of her fear was the uppermost sentiment, I could not but slightly blame her for putting herself into such a situation, being so well aware of her constitutional disposition to be thus affected. For my own part, I do think that I should have died under it, and nothing could prevail upon me to undertake such an expedition. When I was in the whispering gallery at St. Paul's, I had the most dreadful sensation of giddiness and fear that I ever experienced. I could not move one foot beyond the other, and I retired immediately, unable to look down; and I am sure when the sense of personal danger should be added to that other bodily fear, it would be too much for me; therefore I had reason to sympathise with your sister in the course of her narrative.

I hope you will find the inn tolerably comfortable, as I am informed that one of the upper rooms, which was formerly a bedroom, is converted into a sitting-room, which entirely does away our objections to the house for you—the upper rooms being airy and pleasant, and out of the way of noise. Among my lesser cares, and hopes, and wishes, connected with the event of your coming to Grasmere, the desire for fine weather is uppermost; but it will be the rainy season of this country, and we have had so much fine and dry weather, that we must look forward to some deduction from our comfort on that score. We received your second letter with the tidings of the finding of the Journal, the day after we had received the first. You may be sure we were very glad it was found. It is a delicious evening, and after my confinement to the house for these two days past I now doubly enjoy the quiet of the moss-

hut where I am writing. Adieu! Believe me, my dear Lady Beaumont, your affectionate friend,

D. WORDSWORTH.

I have expressed myself obscurely about our objections to calling the child by William's name.[1] I meant that we should not like to call him but as we have been used to do. I could not change William for Brother in speaking familiarly, and his wife could not endure to call him Mr. Wordsworth. Dorothy is in ecstasies whenever she sees her little brother, and she talks about him not only the day through, but in her dreams at night, "Baby, baby!"

Dorothy Wordsworth to Lady Beaumont

THE PRESENT OF BOOKS

GRASMERE, *June* 24, 1806.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I begin my letter with an expectation of being summoned at every moment to deliver it up, along with others which I have been writing, to my brother and Miss Hutchinson, who are going to meet the post at Rydal; but I cannot omit informing you how we go on, as I know you will be anxious about us; besides, we have received the box, etc.; and it is fit that I should release your mind of all further care respecting its contents, which came in perfect safety, and have given general satisfaction, and great joy to your god-daughter (for poor Johnny is not here to look at the beautiful library which you have sent him);

[1] The child was christened Thomas.

but could you see Dorothy, how she spreads her hands and arms, and how she exclaims over each book, as she takes it from the case, and the whole together—such a number! (when by special favour she is permitted to view them), then you would indeed be repaid for the trouble and pains you have taken! She lifts her arms, and shouts and dances, and calls out, "Johnny, book! Dear godmother sent Johnny book!" She looks upon them as sacred to Johnny, and does not attempt to abuse them. She is also very much delighted with her little almanack, but not in such an enthusiastic manner; for I never saw anything like her joy over the whole library of books. But enough of this. I spoil a pen with every letter I write. The binding of the manuscript destined for Coleridge is exactly to our minds, and Mr. Tuffin is not only forgiven but we feel a little compunction for the reproaches which slipped from us when we supposed it to be lost.

I am called for. My brother and Miss Hutchinson are ready. Adieu! Yours ever,

D. WORDSWORTH.

SUSAN FERRIER (1792–1854)

DAUGHTER of Mr. Ferrier, agent to the Duke of Argyll at Inverary and Rosneath. Her first novel was written jointly with Miss Clavering, a niece of the Duke's, Miss Clavering, however, contributing only one chapter. Scott was a great admirer of Miss Ferrier, praising her work and also her liveliness and conversational powers. Her three novels, "Marriage," "The Inheritance," and "Destiny," were all published anonymously, and enjoyed great popularity. The

speculation regarding the authorship of her novels led to Sir Walter Scott being credited with the writing of them.

To Miss Clavering[1]

TOWN OR COUNTRY

My dear Charlotte,—Had you asked me to take Old Nick by the tail, or pull the man o' the moon by the horns, there's no saying what lengths my friendship might have carried me; but really to expect that at this gay season I should forsake the flaunting town for your silent glens is a sacrifice too great for mere feminine affection! 'Tis what the most presuming lover would hardly dare to demand from the most tender mistress; and were I to accord thus much to friendship what would I leave for love? You'll allow I could not carry my enthusiasm to a higher pitch in *this* world than to undertake such a journey upon your account, and the consequences would be that were he to ask me to accompany him on a jaunt to the *next* it would be thought monstrous disobliging to refuse! This must, therefore, prove a deathblow to your hopes, as it must be evident to you that I would only undertake such a thing at the risk of my life, to say nothing of the little casualties of coughs, colds, etc., that would assail me in the course of my travels, and the whole formidable host of the materia medica who would be drawn up to oppose my progress. I've made no mention of the many delights I should leave

[1] The following letters of Susan Ferrier are reprinted from her "Memoir and Correspondence," by Mr. John Ferrier, edited by Mr. J. A. Doyle, by permission of the publisher, Mr. John Murray.

behind, because I should be loath to mortify you by the comparison of my superior enjoyments ; but allow me just to hint to you that dirty streets are not to be exchanged for dry gravel walks, that black kennels are rather more pleasing to the eye than blue rivers, that the scrapings of a blind fiddler are full as melodious as the chirpings of a starved robin, that the flavour of stinking herrings is more satisfying (to the stomach) than the smell of seaweed, and that the sight of clothed men is as gladdening to the heart as the view of naked trees ! But to leave off fooling, and be serious on a subject on which, believe me I only jest because I *can* say nothing to the purpose—how could you have the cruelty, not only to tantalise me with the proposal, but also to insinuate that it would be my own fault were it not accepted !

My dear Charlotte, I think you have known me long enough to know that it is not my practice to make professions to any one, and I hope you will therefore believe I say no more than I feel when I declare to you that had I my choice at this moment, of going to any quarter of the globe or part of the kingdom, I would without hesitation choose to be with you. I have no *bosom friend* out of my own family save you alone (if such you'll allow me to reckon you), and my sisters are now so engrossed, with their respective husbands and children, that their society is no longer to me what it was wont to be. I have, therefore, no *great merit*, you see, in preferring your company to that of any other person, even setting aside the similarity of our tastes and pursuits, which of itself would be a more and never failing source of pleasure and enjoyment. But alas ! such pleasures must never be mine.

I'm doomed to doze away my days by the side of my solitary fire and to spend my nights in the tender intercourse of all the old tabbies in the town. In truth, your solitude is not a whit greater than mine, unless you reckon sound society—of that I own I have enough. But somehow I don't feel my spirits a bit exhilarated, my ideas at all enlivened, or my understanding enlightened by the rattling of carriages or the clanking of chains; and these be the only mortal sounds that meet my ears. As to conversation, that's quite out of the question at this season; in the dull summer months people may find time to sit down and prose and talk sense a little, but at present they have something else to do with their time. My father I never see, save at meals, but then my company is just as indispensable as the tablecloth or chairs, or, in short, any other luxury which custom has converted into necessity. That he could live without me I make no doubt, so he could without a leg or an arm, but it would ill become me to deprive him of either; therefore, never even for a single day could I reconcile it either to my duty or inclination to leave him. Therefore, my dear friend, believe what you are kind enough to ask is for me impossible to accord.

Susan Ferrier to Miss Clavering

A DOG STORY

And then I believe we shall go by Taymouth and farther and farther and farther than I can tell, till at last we will come to a fine Castle, and a beautiful Ladie [1] called the Queen of the Dogs. Do you know

[1] Miss Clavering.

her? Apropos of dogs, you had very near been the death of my darling, as you shall hear.

AIR—MAID IN BEDLAM

One morning very lately, one morning in June,
I rose very early and went into the toon.
My doggie walked behind me, behind me walked he,
For I love my dog because I know my dog loves me!

Oh! cruel was Miss Clavering to send me to the street;
She sent me for to buy silk hosen for her feet.
And there my leetle dog a great big dog did spye,
And I love my dog because I know my dog loves I.

No sooner did my leetle dog the meikle dog behold
Than at him he did fly like any lion bold.
It was a sad and piteous sight for tender eyes to see;
For I love my dog because I know my doggie loves me.

Oh! sore did I screech and loudly did I pray
For some kind stick to drive the meikle dog away.
I never shall forget my fright until the day I dee,
For I love my dog because I know my dog loves me.

And when I got my leetle dog his hind leg was bit thro',
And as he could not walk I knew not what to do.
At length I spied a coachman, beside a coach stood he,
And I love my dog because I know my dog loves me.

And I called to me the coachman, and unto him did say,
Lift my dog into your coach and then drive away.
The coachman looked full scornful till I showed a silver key,
And I love my dog because I k-n-o-w . . my dog-g-y lo-ves
m-e (*da capo*).

This is a true and faithful account, and should be

a warning to all ladies how they walk the streets with little doggies. Mine, I assure you, suffered severely in your service, and though his wound is now healed, I think his general health is considerably impaired by the shock his nerves must have experienced. The medical people are of opinion sea bathing might prove of benefit to him. I say nothing, but if you have a spoonful of marrow in your bones you'll sit down before you read another word and pen him a handsome invitation. As for the eighteen pence it cost me for coach hire, I shall let that pass, as I never expect to see it again. As for the airs you give yourself about wearing white silk stockings I like that mightily—you've a pair of good white satin ones of your own spinning, that will stand both wear and tear, and never lose their colour by washing, so you must e'en make them serve you through the summer, for none other will I send. I sent to Bessie Mure desiring her to surrender up her cheap gloves, as I looked upon him as a much more desirable thing than a dear lover, so she made answer that she knew of no cheap men, but she directed me to where I could get *good gloves* at 1*s.* 4*d.* per pair. Well, away I trotted, resolved to become hand in glove with this pattern glover. So I went into the shop.

"Show me some good stout ladies' gloves," quoth I.
So he took down a parcel and gave me them to try;
I picked out a dozen of pairs and said, "Now I'm willing
To take all these if you'll give me them at the shilling."
Then the glover clasped his hands and said, "Madame, I declare
I could not sell those gloves for less than *three* shillings a pair."

So I said "I was told you had very good gloves at sixteen-pence,
And your asking three shillings for these must be all a pretence!"
Then he brought forth a huge bundle and opened it out;
"These ma'am, are the gloves made from the hide of a trout,
But no more to compare with the skin of a kid or dog
Than the breast of a chicken to the back of a hog."
So, having nothing to reply to a simile so sublime,
I was glad to sneak off and say I would come back when I had more time,
And I swear that's as true as I am now writing rime.

Susan Ferrier to Miss Clavering

THE NEW COOK

[No date.]

My dear Chatty,—It seems I am not to go to the devil with a dish-clout at this time, for from a sorry kitchen wench I'm now transformed into a gay ladye, and nstead of staying at home to dress dinners I do nothing but go about devouring them. In plain terms, I have got a cook, a very bad one, but better than none, and I've invested her with all the regalia of the kitchen, and given her absolute dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the cattle of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth on the face of the earth. I have not a minute to speak to you, for really I do nothing but go out to my dinner, and I'd a thousand times rather eat a raw turnip at home as go to a feast abroad and play at ladies and gentlemen all in a row; but our career ends this week, and then we've to go into our graves and bury ourselves alive

for the rest of the winter! And then I may sit and hatch plots and compose poems as long as to-day and to-morrow if I choose! The very pen is like to jump out of my fingers for joy, though it has small chance of participating in these glorious achievements, as its race is very nearly run—and a weary life it has had under me it must be owned. Apropos, what would you think of writing the life and adventures of a pen? It has this instant flashed upon me that something might be made of such a subject. Think well of it, Miss, and you shall have the honour of beginning the story and continuing it, and if that won't satisfy you, shall conclude it too. As to your poem, I'm sorry I can't serve you, but you might just as well have *seriously* asked me to compose you a Latin oration better than any of Cicero's as have asked me to write verses after Lady Charlotte! If you call those pitiful doggerels (I sent you in an access of folly) poetry, I'm sorry for you, Miss Clavering, but I can't help it. I could not write *poetry* if my life depended upon it, and I never even wrote a single jingle of a rhyme but those I have sent you as aforesaid. To be sure there is one encouraging circumstance, that the writer of them is supposed to be no genius, and I'm sure anything I can send will afford ample confirmation, if any is required. I enclose you, therefore, the beginning of a thing that I shall finish if you think it will do, but I hope you won't stand upon the least ceremony as to rejecting or receiving it as you think fit. At any rate, I *entreat* you won't tell *Miss Adair that it is mine, because* God forbid I should set up for a writer of poetry! I would give anything to see your novel: do send me a morsel of it, I'm sure I shall like it; and you really could not

do me such a favour as to initiate me into the mysteries of your imaginations. When will you be ready to join hands with me? I've just seen Lord John about half a minute since he came here; Bessie Mure keeps him in her reticule and never lets anybody get a peep at him: they dined here on Monday, but they got such a beastly repast, and were so scurvily treated, that I've been sick ever since with pure shame and vexation of stomach.

Susan Ferrier to Miss Clavering

THE CHOICE OF TWO EVILS

[1816.]

I relent; here is a letter for you, so dry your eyes, wipe your nose, and promise to be a good child, and I shall forgive you for this time. I'm sure you must be very sorry for having displeased me, for I know my friendship is the only thing in the world you care about; everything else compared to it is as cold porridge to turtle soup. Tell me how you have sped in the long night of my silence. Did not the sun appear to you like an old coal basket, and the heavens as a wet blanket? Was not the moon invisible to your weeping eyes? Were not the fields to your distempered fancy without verdure, and the boughs without blossoms? And did not the birds refuse to sing, and the lambs to dance? Did not the wind sometimes seem to sigh and the dogs to howl? All these and a thousand such prodigies I know have appeared to you in the long interval of my silence; but now the spell is broken, and all these fearful visions will vanish; you will see

the sun break out as yellow as your hair, and the moon shine as white as your hand; the fields will grow as green as grass in December, and the birds will dance waltzes all the way before you from the post-office; you will taste of five more dishes at dinner to testify your joy, and you will toss off an additional glass of ale in honour of every sentence I shall indite. You would hear how Lady Charlotte had tarried in this place ten days, but I got very little good of her. She was so *cherché* and *recherché*. She dined with me one day, however, and had John Wilson to show off with, and there arose a question whether a woman of a right way of thinking would not rather be stabbed as kicked by her husband (observe this burn hole, Miss, it is a sure sign that either you or I are going to be married; but keep that to yourself, and excuse this parenthesis, which, indeed, is rather too long, but I hope you have not such an antipathy to them as Dean Swift had; he, honest man! could not abide the sight of them, which was certainly a prejudice on his part; for mine, I think, there are worse things in the world than parentheses). But to return to where I was (which, indeed, is not such an easy matter, as I must turn the page to see where I left off; it was at the burnt hole, and here I am just coming upon another, which looks as if we were *both* going to be wed; I wonder who it will be to!) I am for a stabber, but I dare say you will be for putting up with a kicker. It was talking of Lord Byron brought on the question. I maintain there is but one crime a woman could never forgive in her husband, and that is a *kucking*. Did you ever read anything so exquisite as the new canto of "Childe Harold"? It is enough to make a woman fly into

the arms of a tiger; nothing but a kick could ever have hardened her heart against such genius.

ELIZABETH INCHBALD (1753–1821)

ACTRESS and dramatist, was a daughter of John Simpson, a Suffolk farmer. She went to London in 1772, and there married Joseph Inchbald, an actor. In 1780 she appeared at Covent Garden, but did not achieve great success until nine years later, when she began to write plays. She also edited a voluminous collection of British dramatists, and wrote two novels: "A Simple Story" and "Nature and Art."

To Mrs. Phillips

THE FIRE

Sunday, February 26, 1809.

I saw nothing of the conflagration of Covent Garden Theatre, but was a miserable spectator of all the horrors of Drury Lane. I went to bed at ten, was waked at a quarter before twelve, and went into the front room opposite to mine, while the flames were surrounding the Apollo at the top of the playhouse, and driven by the wind towards the New Church, which appeared every moment to be in danger.

I love sublime and terrific sights, but this was so terrible I ran from it; and in my own room was astonished by a prospect more beautiful, more brilliantly and calmly celestial, than ever met my eye. No appearance of fire from my window except the light of its beams; and this was so powerful, that the river, the houses on its banks, the Surrey Hills beyond, every boat upon the water, every spire of a church, Somerset

House and its terrace on this side—all looked like one enchanted spot, such as a poet paints, in colours more bright than nature ever displayed in this foggy island. I do not proceed out of my own house on this subject, for the newspaper will tell you all the rest. I had on that very day begun to read a book which gratified my taste and my opinions very much; it contained *Sermons* in favour of the Stage. I was proud to find a clergyman so judicious and so liberal on this topic. You will be surprised to find that this book came to me as a present from the author, when I tell you that his name is Plumptre.

This puts me in mind of indulging my vanity. In my profession I am sometimes idle for months or years; but, when I resolve on writing, I earn my money with speed. No resolution of the kind has however come to me of late; and yet, the week before last, I earned fifty guineas in five minutes, by merely looking over a catalogue of fifty farces, drawing my pen across one or two, and writing the names of others in their place: and now all those in that catalogue are to be printed with "Selected by Mrs. Inchbald" on the title page. The prodigious sale my Prefaces have had has tempted the booksellers to this offer.

E. I.

Mrs. Inchbald to her Sister

A WEEK'S DIETARY

. . . Take chocolate for breakfast. If you be faint, wine and toasted bread between breakfast and dinner; and thus vary your dinner each day:—Sunday, a joint

of meat; Monday, two lean mutton chops boiled but not stewed, with an onion, a turnip, and a carrot; Tuesday, a beef steak, preferably beef roasted; Wednesday, a broiled mutton chop; Thursday, a veal cutlet; Friday, stewed oysters or eggs; Saturday, nice boiled beef from the cook's shop, or a pork chop, a rabbit, or anything more novel you can think of.

Eat, whenever you have an appetite, but never eat too heartily, especially of different things. Have cake or what you please at tea; a light supper; but go to bed satisfied, or you will not sleep.

> Let not Ambition mock *this* useful toil,
> These homely joys and destiny obscure;
> Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
> The short and simple *Story* of the poor.

Mrs. Inchbald to Mrs. Phillips

A SELF-CONTAINED FLAT

. . . My present apartment is so small, that I am all over black and blue with thumping my body and limbs against my furniture on every side: but then I have not far to *walk* to reach anything I want; for I can kindle my fire as I lie in bed; and put on my cap as I dine, for the looking-glass is obliged to stand on the same table with my dinner. To be sure, if there was a fire in the night, I must inevitably be burnt, for I am at the top of the house, and so removed from the front part of it, that I cannot hear the least sound of anything from the street; *but then*, I have a great deal of fresh air; more daylight than most people in London, and the *enchanting* view of the Thames, the

Surrey Hills, and of *three windmills*, often throwing their giant arms about, secure from every attack of the Knight of the woful countenance.[1]

MARJORY FLEMING (1803–1811)

"Pet Marjory," whose life has been so beautifully told in an essay by Dr. John Brown. She was idolised by Sir Walter Scott, and was constantly with him during her short life, which was lived in Edinburgh. The letters and poems of this lovable little girl are remarkable productions for so young a child.

To Isabella Keith

A CHILD'S CORRESPONDENCE

1809.

My dear Isa,—I now sit down to answer all your kind and beloved letters which you was so good as to write to me. This is the first time I ever wrote a letter in my Life. There are a great many Girls in the Square and they cry just like a pig when we are under the painful necessity of putting it to Death. Miss Potune a Lady of my acquaintance praises me dreadfully. I repeated something out of Dean Swift, and she said I was fit for the stage, and you may think I was primmed up with majistick Pride, but upon my word felt myselfe turn a little birsay—birsay is a word which is a word that William composed which is as you may suppose a little enraged. This horrid fat simpliton says that my Aunt is beautiful which is intirely impossible for that is not her nature.

[1] Her lodging was in the Strand.

Marjory Fleming to her Mother

September 1811.

MY DEAR LITTLE MAMA,—I was truly happy to hear that you were all well, We are surrounded with measles at present on every side, for the Herons got it, and Isabella Heron was near Death's Door, and one night her father lifted her out of bed, and she fell down as they thought lifeless. Mr. Heron said,—"That lassie's deed noo." "I'm no deed yet." She then threw up a big worm nine inches and a half long. I have begun dancing but am not very fond of it, for the boys strikes and mocks me.—I have been another night at the dancing; I like it better. I will write to you as often as I can; but I am afraid not every week. I long for you with the longings of a child to embrace you—to hold you in my arms. I respect you with all the respect due to a mother. You don't know how I love you. So I shall remain, your loving child,

M. FLEMING.

Marjory Fleming to her Mother

October 12, 1811.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—You will think that I entirely forgot you, but I assure you that you are greatly mistaken. I think of you always and often sigh to think of the distance between us two loving creatures of nature. We have regular hours for all our occupations, first at 7 o'clock we go to the dancing and come home at 8, we then read our Bible and get our repeating and then play till ten then we get our music till 11 when we get our writing and accounts we sew from 12 till

1, after which I get my gramer and then work till five. At 7 we come and knit till 8 when we dont go to the dancing. This is an exact description. I must take a hasty farewell to her whom I love, reverence and doat on, and who I hope thinks the same of

MARJORY FLEMING.

P.S.—An old pack of cards would be very exeptible.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817)

WAS born at Steventon Rectory, near Basingstoke. She was carefully educated by her father, the Rev. George Austen, who thought highly of her talents. Her first published novel, "Sense and Sensibility" (1811), was followed by "Pride and Prejudice," "Mansfield Park" and "Emma" (these four were anonymous); and posthumously "Northanger Abbey" and "Persuasion." She died at Winchester of consumption at the age of forty-two.

To her Sister [1]

"PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"

CHAWTON, *Friday, January* 29 [1813].

I hope you received my little parcel by J. Bond on Wednesday evening, my dear Cassandra, and that you will be ready to hear from me again on Sunday, for I feel that I must write to you to-day. I want to tell you that I have got my own darling child from London. On Wednesday I received one copy sent down by Falkener, with three lines to say that he had given another to Charles and sent a third by the coach

[1] This letter and the following are reprinted by the courtesy of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., from "A Memoir of Jane Austen," by her nephew, Mr. J. E. Austen-Leigh.

to Godmersham. . . . The advertisement is in our paper to-day for the first time: 18*s*. He shall ask £1 1*s*. for my two next, and £1 8*s*. for my stupidest of all. Miss B. dined with us on the very day of the book's coming, and in the evening we fairly set at it, and read half the first vol. to her, prefacing that, having intelligence from Henry that such a work would soon appear, we had desired him to send it whenever it came out, and I believe it passed with her unsuspected. She was amused, poor soul! That she could not help, you know, with two such people to lead the way, but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least I do not know. There are a few typical errors; and a "said he" or a "said she" would sometimes make the dialogue more immediately clear; but "I do not write for such dull elves" as have not a great deal of ingenuity themselves. The second volume is shorter than I could wish, but the difference is not so much in reality as in look, there being a larger proportion of narrative in that part. I have lop't and crop't so successfully, however, that I imagine it must be rather shorter than "Sense and Sensibility" altogether.

Jane Austen to J. S. Clarke, Librarian to the Prince Regent

ROYAL APPRECIATION

CHAWTON, near ALTON, *April* 1, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am honoured by the Prince's thanks and very much obliged to yourself for the kind manner

in which you mention the work. I have also to acknowledge a former letter forwarded to me from Hans Place. I assure you I felt very grateful for the friendly tenor of it, and hope my silence will have been considered, as it was truly meant, to proceed only from an unwillingness to tax your time with idle thanks. Under every interesting circumstance which your own talents and literary labours have placed you in, or the favour of the Regent bestowed, you have my best wishes. Your recent appointments I hope are a step to something still better. In my opinion, the service of a Court can hardly be too well paid, for immense must be the sacrifice of time and feeling required by it.

You are very kind in your hints as to the sort of composition which might recommend me at present, and I am fully sensible that an historical romance founded on the house of Saxe Coburg might be much more to the purpose of profit or popularity than such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in. But I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life; and if it were indispensable for me to keep it up and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No, I must keep to my own style and go on in my own way; and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I should totally fail in any other.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Your very much obliged,

and sincere friend,

J. Austen.

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD (1787–1855)

WAS the only child of Dr. Mitford of Hampshire. On her tenth birthday her father gave her a lottery ticket which drew a prize of £20,000. Her first volume of poems was published in 1810. In 1820 she found it necessary to write for the purpose of earning money; and four of her tragedies were acted, but are now forgotten. But Miss Mitford is still remembered for her work entitled "Our Village," a series of delightful sketches of English rural life.

To Sir William Elford [1]

WORDSWORTH AND THE SIMPLE LIFE

BERTRAM HOUSE, *November* 9, 1818.

Yes, my dear Sir William, your prognostics were right; a scolding letter was actually written and sent off two days before I received the charming packet about which you are pleased to talk so much nonsense in the way of apology. You must forgive the scolding, and you will forgive it I am sure; for you know I was not then apprised of the grand evils of mind and body by which you were assailed—the teeth and the rats. I hope these enemies are in a good train to be overcome and cured—that the teeth are multiplying and the rats decreasing. N.B.—If you want a first-rate breed of cats we can supply you. We have a white cat, half Persian, as deaf as a post, with one eye blue and the other yellow, who, besides being a great beauty, is the

[1] The following letters by Miss Mitford are printed by courtesy of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., from the Rev. A. G. L'Estrange's "Life of Mary Russell Mitford."

best ratcatcher in the county. Shall we save you one of the next litter of white kittens ?

You ask me about Blackwood's "Edinburgh Magazine": I will tell you just what it is—a very libellous, naughty, wicked, scandalous, story-telling, entertaining work—a sort of chapel-of-ease to my old friend the *Quarterly Review*; abusing all the wits and poets and politicians of *our* side, and praising all of *yours*; abusing Hazlitt, abusing John Keats, abusing Leigh Hunt, abusing (and this is really too bad), abusing Haydon, and lauding Mr. Gifford, Mr. Croker, and Mr. Canning. But all this, especially the abuse, is very cleverly done; and I think you would be amused by it. I particularly recommend to you the poetical notices to correspondents, the "Mao Banker of Amsterdam" and some letters on the sagacity of the shepherd's dog by that delightful poet, James Hogg. . . . When I was telling you some of Mr. Wordsworth's absurdities, did I tell you that he never dined ? I have just had a letter from Mrs. Hofland, who has been with her husband to the Lakes, and spent some days at a Mr. Marshall's, for whom Mr. H—— was painting a picture —but Mrs. Hofland shall speak for herself:—"On my return from Mr. M.'s to our Ullswater Cottage, I encountered a friend who condoled with me on the dullness of my visit. 'Dull!' It was delightful! The long *triste* dinners, the breakfasts, the suppers, the luncheons!" To be sure fourteen people must eat, but these said dinners were anything but dull, I assure you. Why do you call them so ? Because Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth were staying there, and were so overcome by those shocking meals, that they were forced to come away ? The Wordsworths never dine, you know;

they hate such doings ; when they are hungry they go to the cupboard and eat ! And really," observes Mr. Hofland, "it is much the best way. There is Mr. Wordsworth, who will live for a month on cold beef, and the next on cold bacon ; and my husband will insist on a hot dinner every day. He never thinks how much trouble I have in ordering, nor what a plague my cook is ! " So you see the Wordsworth regimen is likely to spread.

Very sincerely and affectionately yours,

M. R. M.

Mary Russell Mitford to Sir William Elford

AN ARTIST'S EGOTISM

November 12 [1819].

I am just fresh from Farley Hill, where I have been spending part of two days. Thank you, Mrs. Dickinson is going on very well, and sends compliments to you. Mr. Dickinson was just fresh arrived from Slough—Dr. Herschel's. Do you know anything of the worthy astronomer ? I was interested by Mr. Dickinson's account of him and his goings on. He has at last been obliged to dismount his telescope, and relinquish his observations ; but till within the last year he and his sister sat up every night, he observing, and she writing as he dictated. The brother is eighty-two and the sister seventy, and they have pursued this course these twenty, thirty, forty years. Is not this a fine instance of female devotion—of the complete absorption of mind and body in the pursuits of the brother and friend whom she loved so well ? I know

as little of the stars as any other superficial woman, who looks on them with the eye of fancy rather than science, and I have no great wish to know more, but I cannot help almost envying Miss Herschel's beautiful self-devotion. It is the true glory of woman, and in an old woman still more interesting than in a young one. Poor Herschel himself lost an eye some time ago: four or five glasses snapped, one after another, as he was making an observation on the sun, and a ray fell directly on his eye. That divine luminary does not choose to be pryed into.

I must tell you a little story of Haydon at which I could not help laughing. Leigh Hunt (not the notorious Mr. Henry Hunt, but the fop, poet, and politician of *The Examiner*) is a great keeper of birthdays. He was celebrating that of Haydn, the great composer—giving a dinner, crowning his bust with laurels, berhyming the poor dead German, and conducting an apotheosis in full form. Somebody told Mr. Haydon that they were celebrating *his* birthday. So off he trotted to Hampstead, and bolted into the company—made a very fine, animated speech—thanked them most sincerely for the honour they had done him and the arts in his person. But they had made a little mistake in the day. His birthday, etc., etc.

Now, this *bonhomie* is a little ridiculous, but a thousand times preferable to the wicked wit of which the poor artist was the dupe. Did you ever hear this story? It was told me by a great admirer of Mr. Haydon's and friend of Leigh Hunt's. He is rather a dangerous friend, I think. He chooses his favourites to laugh at—a very good reason for his being so gracious to me! Good-night once more, my dear friend. You

know I always write to you at the go-to-bed time, just as fires and candles are going out. Good-night!

Ever most affectionately yours,

M. R. MITFORD.

Mary Russell Mitford to Sir William Elford

EDWARD IRVING

THREE MILE CROSS, *February* 19, 1825.

. . . Whilst in town I put myself in the way of a conversion of another sort, by going to hear Mr. Irving. Did you ever hear him? If not, do: he is really worth a little trouble. I had read a hundred descriptions of him, and seen half a score prints, which I took for caricatures, till I saw him; and then he seemed to me a caricature of his portraits—more tall, more squinting, more long black-haired, more cadaverous, more like Frankenstein. His sermon, too, was even odder than I expected, in matter and manner; the *latter* seemed to me as good as possible, the *former* sometimes good, but full of pretension and affectation of every sort. I have no doubt whatever but that the Rev. Edward Irving is the vainest person that lives at this moment; and I that say so have got the honour of being acquainted with divers actors and sundry poets. I could not have conceived so much quackery possible in the pulpit. A small adventure befell me which I cannot help telling you. I went with an old lady, who at the end of two hours and a half was really ill with the heat and the crowd, and asked me to go out with her. Of course I complied. When we got to the door we found a gentleman with his back planted

against it, who point-blank refused to let us out. Heard ever any one of being shut into a chapel! Mr. Milman says an action would lie for false imprisonment; and being in a barrister's house I might have had law cheap. My poor old friend, however, was suffering; and I was not quite young enough in the world to be taken in. I therefore turned to the loiterers in the aisles, and picking out my man—a fine, spirited-looking person, the most anti-puritanical that you can imagine—I said to him, "Sir, this lady is indisposed, and that gentleman——" "G—d—n me, madam," exclaimed my hopeful ally, "this is some d—d whim of Dawkins —I'll let you out." And forthwith he and another young man of his sort sprang at once on the luckless Dawkins (an elder of the congregation)—displaced him *par voie du fait*, and gave us free egress from the Caledonian Church under the very nose of the pastor.

On telling this story the next day to Charles Lamb, he told me that a friend of his, having sat through two hours of sermon, walked off in the same way; but, just as she was leaving the church, Mr. Irving himself addressed her in a most violent manner from the pulpit, whereupon she turned round, smiled, nodded, curtsied, and then walked off. I certainly could not have done that, nor was it right, although Mr. Irving himself has turned a house of worship into a mere public place—a Sunday theatre,—where he delivers orations half made up of criticisms and abuse, and preaches for five hours a day such sermons as never were called sermons before. If you have not heard him you will accuse me of levity; but I assure you the most scrupulous people speak of him as I do—everybody indeed, except the select few who compose

his exclusive admirers—and even they praise him just as they praise an orator, and cry up his discourses just as they cry up a clever article in a magazine. I am sorry for this, for the man, in spite of his execrable taste, has power—great power. He fixes the attention, provokes you very much by the most inconceivable bombast, but never wearies you. He certainly has power, and if he should have the good luck to go so completely out of fashion, as neither to be followed, praised, or blamed, which is likely enough to happen in a year or two, I should not wonder to find him become a great orator.

Adieu, my very dear friend. This is something like my old budget of sauciness—in length at least—and I am afraid in carelessness and illegibility; but I am quite sure of your indulgence, and that of your kind family. Say everything for me to them all, especially to Miss Elford.

Ever most gratefully yours,
M. R. M.

Mary Russell Mitford to Elizabeth B. Barrett (Mrs. Browning)

A PROPHECY OF FAME

Three Mile Cross, *March* 24, 1842.

Thanks upon thanks, my beloved friend, for the kindness which humours even my fancies. I am delighted to have the reading of Anna Seward's letters. Perhaps we both of us like those works which show us men and women as they are—faults, frailties, and all. I confess that I do love all that identifies and

individualises character—the warts upon Cromwell's face, which like a great man as he was would not allow the artist to omit when painting his portrait. Therefore I like Hayley, and therefore was I a goose of the first magnitude when, for a passing moment, just by way of gaining for the poor bard a portion of your good graces (for I did not want to gain for him the applause of the public—he had it and lost it), I wished his editor to have un-Hayley'd him by wiping away some of the affectations—the warts—no—the rouge, upon his face.

My love and my ambition for you often seem to be more like that of a mother for a son, or a father for a daughter (the two fondest of natural emotions), than the common bonds of even a close friendship between two women of different ages and similar pursuits. I sit and think of you, and of the poems that you will write, and of that strange brief rainbow crown called Fame, until the vision is before me as vividly as ever a mother's heart hailed the eloquence of a patriot son. Do you understand this? and do you pardon it? You must, my precious, for there is no chance that I should unbuild *that* house of clouds; and the position that I long to see you fill is higher, firmer, prouder than ever has been filled by woman. It is a strange feeling, but one of indescribable pleasure. My pride and my hopes seem altogether merged in you. Well, I will not talk more of this; but at my time of life, and with so few to love, and with a tendency to body forth images of gladness and of glory, you cannot think what joy it is to anticipate the time. How kind you are to pardon my gossiping and to like it.

God bless you, my sweetest, for the dear love which finds something to like in these jottings! It is the

instinct of the bee, that sucks honey from the hedge flower.

. . . Did you ever read Holcroft's Memoirs? If not, I think you would like them. I did *exceedingly*. He was a poor boy, who carried Staffordshire ware about the country; then he exercised the horses at Newmarket. Do read it; I know nothing more graphic or more true. Do you know his comedy, *The Road to Ruin*? The serious scenes of that play, between the father and son, are amongst the most touching in the language. . . .

Ever yours,
M. R. MITFORD.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (1797–1851)

WAS born in London, the daughter of William and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. Her education she owed mainly to her father. In 1816 she became the second wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley and spent some five years in Italy, returning to England on the death of Shelley. At the age of eighteen she wrote a sensational romance "Frankenstein," followed by "Valpurga" and "The Last Man," besides "Rambles in Germany and Italy," and a valuable collected edition of Shelley's poems.

To Mrs. Leigh Hunt

LIFE AT LEGHORN

LEGHORN, *August* 28, 1819.

MY DEAR MARIANNE,—We are very dull at Leghorn, and I can therefore write nothing to amuse you. We

live in a little country house at the end of a green lane surrounded by a *podére*. These *podére* are just the things Hunt would like. They are like our kitchen gardens, with the difference only that the beautiful fertility of the country gives them. A large bed of cabbages is very unpicturesque in England, but here the furrows are alternated with rows of grapes festooned on their supporters. It is filled with olive, fig, and peach trees, and the hedges are of myrtle, which have just ceased to flower; their flower has the sweetest faint smell in the world, like some delicious spice; green grassy walks lead you through the vines; the people are always busy, and it is pleasant to see three or four of them transform in one day a bed of Indian corn to one of celery. They work this hot weather in their shirts, or smock frocks (but their breasts are bare), their brown legs nearly the colour, only with a rich tinge of red in it, of the earth they turn up. They sing not very melodiously, but very loud, Rossini's music, *mi rivedrai ti revedrò*, and they are accompanied by the cicala, a kind of little beetle that makes a noise with its tail as loud as Johnny can sing; they live on trees, and three or four together are enough to deafen you. It is to the cicala that Anacreon has addressed an ode which they call "To a Grasshopper" in the English translations.

Well, here we live; I never am in good spirits—often in very bad, and Hunt's portrait has already seen me shed so many tears, that if it had his heart as well as his eyes, he would weep too in pity. But no more of this, or a tear will come now, and there is no use for that.

By the by, a hint Hunt gave about portraits. The

Italian painters are very bad; they might make a nose like Shelley's, and perhaps a mouth, but I doubt it; but there would be no expression about it. They have no notion of anything except copying again and again their old masters; and somehow mere copying, however divine the original, does a great deal more harm than good.

Shelley has written a good deal, and I have done very little since I have been in Italy. I have had so much to see, and so many vexations independent of those which God has kindly sent to wean me from the world if I were too fond of it. S. has not had good health by any means, and when getting better, fate has ever contrived something to pull him back. He never was better than the last month of his stay in Rome, except the last week—then he watched sixty miserable death-like hours without closing his eyes,[1] and you may think what good that did him.

We see the *Examiners* regularly now, four together, just two months after the publication of the last. I have a word to say to Hunt of what he says concerning Italian dancing. The Italians dance very badly. They dress for their dances in the ugliest manner: the men in little doublets with a hat and feather; they are very stiff, nothing but their legs move, and they twirl and jump with as little grace as may be. It is not for their dancing but their pantomime that the Italians are famous. You remember what we told you of the ballet of *Othello*. They tell a story by action, so that words appear perfectly superfluous things for them. In that they are graceful, agile, impressive and very affecting, so that I delight in nothing

[1] At the death-bed of his little boy.

so much as a deep tragic ballet. But the dancing, unless as they sometimes do, they dance as common people; for instance, the dance of joy of the Venetian citizens on the return of Othello is very bad indeed.

I am very much obliged to you for all your kind offers and wishes. Hunt would do Shelley a great deal of good, but that we may not think of; his spirits are tolerably good. But you do not tell me how you get on, how Bessy is, and where she is. Remember me to her. Clare is learning thorough bass and singing. We pay four crowns a month for her master, three times a week; cheap work this, is it not? At Rome we paid three shillings a lesson, and the master stayed two hours. The one we have now is the best in Leghorn. I write in the morning, read Latin till two, when we dine; then I read some English book, and two cantos of Dante with Shelley. In the evening our friends the Gisbornes come, so we are not perfectly alone. I like Mrs. Gisborne very much indeed, but her husband is most dreadfully dull; and as he is always with her we have not so much pleasure in her company as we otherwise should. . . .

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley to Mrs. Gisborne

THE DEATH OF SHELLEY

PISA, *September* 10, 1822.

And so here I am! I continue to exist; to see one day succeed the other; to dread night, but more to dread morning, and hail another cheerless day. My boy, too, is, alas! no consolation. When I think how he loved him—the plans he had for his education—his

sweet and childish voice strikes me to the heart. Why should he live in this world of pain and anguish ? And if he went I should go too, and we should all sleep in peace.

At times I feel an energy within me to combat with my destiny—but again I sink. I have but one hope, for which I live—to render myself worthy to join him; and such a feeling sustains me during moments of enthusiasm ; but darkness and misery soon overwhelm the mind, when all near objects bring agony alone with them. People used to call me lucky in my star : you see now how true such a prophecy is !

I was fortunate in having fearlessly placed my destiny in the hands of one who—a superior being among men, a bright planetary spirit enshrined in an earthly temple—raised me to the height of happiness. So far am I now happy, that I would not change my situation as *his* widow with that of the most prosperous woman in the world ; and surely the time will at length come when I shall be at peace, and my brain and heart be no longer alive with unutterable anguish. I can conceive but of one circumstance that could afford me the semblance of content—that is, the being permitted to live where I am now, in the same house, in the same state, occupied alone with my child, in collecting his manuscripts, writing his life, and thus to go easily to my grave.

But this must not be ! Even if circumstances did not compel me to return to England, I would not stay another summer in Italy with my child. I will at least do my best to render him well and happy ; and the idea that my circumstances may at all injure him is the fiercest pang my mind endures.

I wrote you a long letter, containing a slight sketch

of my sufferings. I sent it, directed to Peacock, at the India House, because accident led me to believe that you were no longer in London. I said in that, that on that day (August 15) they had gone to perform the last offices for him ; however, I erred in this, for on that day those of Edward were alone fulfilled, and they returned on the 16th to celebrate Shelley's. I will say nothing of the ceremony, since Trelawny has written an account of it, to be printed in the forthcoming journal. I will only say, that all except his heart (which was inconsumable) was burnt, and that two days ago I went to Leghorn and beheld the small box that contained his earthly dress. Those smiles—that form—Great God ! no—he is not there ; he is with me, about me—life of my life, and soul of my soul ! If his divine spirit did not penetrate mine, I could not survive to weep thus.

I will mention the friends I have here, that you may form an idea of our situation. Mrs. Williams and I live together. We have one purse, and, joined in misery, we are for the present joined in life.

The poor girl withers like a lily. She lives for her children ; but it is a living death. Lord Byron has been very kind. But the friend to whom we are eternally indebted is Trelawny. I have, of course, mentioned him to you as one who wishes to be considered eccentric, but who was noble and generous at bottom. I always thought so even when no fact proved it ; and Shelley agreed with me, as he always did—or rather, I with him. We heard people speak against him on account of his vagaries : we said to one another, " Still we like him ; we believe him to be good." Once, even, when a whim of his led him to treat me with something like impertinence, I forgave him, and I have now been well

rewarded. In my outline of events, you will see how, unasked, he returned with Jane and me from Leghorn to Lerici; how he stayed with us miserable creatures twelve days there, endeavouring to keep up our spirits; how he left us on Thursday, and, finding our misfortune confirmed, then, without rest, returned on Friday to us, and again without rest, returned with us to Pisa on Saturday. These were no common services. Since that, he has gone through by himself all the annoyances of dancing attendance on consuls and governors, for permission to fulfil the last duties to those gone, and attending the ceremony himself. All the disagreeable part, and all the fatigue, fell on him. As Hunt said, "He worked with the meanest and felt with the best." He is generous to a distressing degree; but after all these benefits what I most thank him for is this:—When, on that night of agony—that Friday night—he returned, to announce that hope was dead for us; when he had told me that, his earthly frame being found, his spirit was no longer to be my guide, protector, and companion in this dark world,—he did not attempt to console me; that would have been too cruelly useless; but he launched forth into, as it were, an overflowing and eloquent praise of my divine Shelley, till I was almost happy that I was thus unhappy, to be fed by the praise of him, and to dwell on the eulogy that his loss thus drew from his friend.

God knows what will become of me! My life is now very monotonous as to outward events; yet how diversified by internal feeling! How often, in the intensity of grief, does one instant seem to fill and embrace the universe! As to the rest—the mechanical spending of my time—of course I have a great deal to do pre-

paring for my journey. I make no visits except one, once in about ten days, to Mrs. Mason. Trelawny resides chiefly at Leghorn, since he is captain of Lord Byron's vessel, the *Bolivar*. He comes to see us about once a week, and Lord Byron visits us about twice a week, accompanied by the Guiccioli ; but seeing people is an annoyance which I am happy to be spared. Solitude is my only help and resource. Accustomed, even when he was with me, to spend much of my time alone, I can at those moments forget myself, until some idea, which I think I would communicate to him, occurs, and then the yawning and dark gulf again displays itself, unshaded by the rainbows which the imagination had formed. Despair, energy, love, desponding and excessive affliction, are like clouds driven across my mind, one by one, until tears blot the scene, and weariness of spirit consigns me to temporary repose.

I shudder with horror when I look back upon what I have suffered ; and when I think of the wild and miserable thoughts that have possessed me, I say to myself, " Is it true that I ever felt thus ? " and then I weep in pity for myself ; yet each day adds to the stock of sorrow ; and death is the only end. I would study, and I hope I shall. I would write, and, when I am settled I may. But were it not for the steady hope I entertain of joining him, what a mockery would be this world ! Without that hope, I could not study or write ; for fame and usefulness (except as far as regards my child) are nullities to me. Yet I shall be happy if anything I ever produce may exalt and soften sorrow, as the writings of the divinities of our race have mine. But how can I aspire to that ?

The world will surely one day feel what it has lost,

when this bright child of song deserted her. Is not *Adonais* his own elegy ? And there does he truly depict the universal woe which should overspread all good minds, since he has ceased to be their fellow-labourer in this worldly scene. How lovely does he paint death to be, and with what heartfelt sorrow does one repeat that line :

But I am chain'd to time, and cannot thence depart !

How long do you think I shall live ? As long as my mother ? Then eleven long years must intervene. I am now on the eve of completing my five-and-twentieth year. How drearily young for one so lost as I ! How young in years for one who lives ages each day in sorrow ! Think you that those moments are counted in my life as in other people's ? Ah, no ! The day before the sea closed over mine own Shelley, he said to Marianne, " If I die to-morrow I have lived to be older than my father. I am ninety years of age." Thus also may I say. The eight years I passed with him were spun out beyond the usual length of a man's life ; and what I have suffered since will write years on my brow, and entrench them in my heart. Surely I am not long for this world. Most sure would I be were it not for my boy ; but God grant that I may live to make his early years happy !

Well, adieu ! I have no events to write about, and can therefore only scrawl about my feelings. This letter, indeed, is only the sequel of my last. In that I closed the history of all that can interest me. That letter I wish you to send my father : the present it is best not.

I suppose I shall see you in England some of these

days; but I shall write to you again before I quit this place. Be as happy as you can, and hope for better things in the next world. By firm hope you may attain your wishes. Again adieu!

Affectionately yours,
M. W. SHELLEY.

LADY ANN BARNARD (1750–1825)

ELDEST daughter of James Lindsay, Earl of Balcarres; married Andrew Barnard, son of the Bishop of Limerick, in 1793. She wrote the beautiful lyric "Auld Robin Gray" in 1772, but its authorship remained a secret until she acknowledged it for the first time in the following letter to Sir Walter Scott.

To Sir Walter Scott

AULD ROBIN GRAY

BERKELEY SQUARE, LONDON, *July* 8, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am really ashamed to tell you how long I have remained balancing between the strong desire I had of addressing you, and the timidity I felt on encroaching upon time so valuable to the world at large; but I am convinced your good nature will not only pardon me, but will induce you to grant the favour I am about to ask. It is, that you will convey to the author of "Waverley," with whom I am informed you are personally acquainted, how gratefully I feel the kindness with which he has (in the second volume of "The Pirate," thirteenth chapter) so distinguishedly noticed and, by his powerful authority, assigned the long-contested ballad of "Auld Robin Gray" to its real author.

In truth, the position I was placed in about that song had at last become irksome to me; how can I, then, so fully mark my thankfulness to him who has relieved me from my dilemma, as by transmitting to him, fairly and frankly, the Origin, Birth, Life, Death, and Confession, Will and Testament, of "Auld Robin Gray," with the assurance that the author of "Waverley" is the first person out of my own family who has ever had an explanation from me on the subject?

Robin Gray, so called from its being the name of the old herdsman at Balcarres, was *born* soon after the close of the year 1771. My sister Margaret had married and accompanied her husband to London; I was melancholy, and endeavoured to amuse myself by attempting a few poetical trifles. There was an ancient Scotch melody of which I was passionately fond—Sophy Johnstone, who lived before your day, used to sing it to us at Balcarres; I longed to sing old Sophy's air to different words, and to give to its plaintive tones some little history of virtuous distress in humble life, such as might suit it. While attempting to effect this in my closet, I called to my little sister, now Lady Hardwicke, who was the only person near me,—"I have been writing a ballad, my dear,—I am oppressing my heroine with many misfortunes,—I have already sent her Jamie to sea, and broken her father's arm, and made her mother fall sick, and given her Auld Robin Gray for a lover, but I wish to load her with a fifth sorrow, in the four lines, poor thing! help me to one, I pray." "Steal the cow, sister Anne," said the little Elizabeth. The cow was immediately *lifted* by me, and the song completed. At our fireside, amongst our neighbours, "Auld Robin Gray" was always called for; I was pleased with the approba-

tion it met with; but such was my dread of being suspected of writing anything, perceiving the shyness it created in those who could write nothing, that I carefully kept my own secret.

. . . From one honest man I had an excellent hint; the Laird of Dalzell, after hearing it, broke into the angry exclamation of "Oh, the villain! oh, the auld rascal! *I* ken wha stealt the poor lassie's *coo*—it was Auld Robin Gray himsel'!" I thought this a bright idea, and treasured it up for a future occasion. Meantime, little as this matter seems to have been worthy of dispute, it afterwards became almost a party question between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries: "Robin Gray" was either a very, very ancient ballad, composed perhaps by David Rizzio, and a great curiosity, or a very, very modern matter, and no curiosity at all. I was persecuted to confess whether I had written it, or, if not, where I had got it. Old Sophy kept my counsel, and I kept my own, in spite of the gratification of seeing a reward of twenty guineas offered in the newspapers to the person who could ascertain the point past a doubt, and the still more flattering circumstance of a visit from Mr. J——, secretary to the Antiquarian Society, who endeavoured to entrap the truth from me in a manner I took amiss. Had he asked me the question obligingly, I should have told him the fact distinctly, but confidentially: the annoyance, however, of this important ambassador from the Antiquaries was amply repaid to me by the moble exhibition of the ballet of Auld Robin Gray's courtship, as performed by dancing dogs under my windows;—it proved its popularity from the highest to the lowest, and gave me pleasure while I hugged myself in my obscurity.

Such was the history of the first part of it. As to the second, it was written many years after, in compliment to my dear old mother, who often said : "Annie ! I wish you would tell me how that unlucky business of Jeanie and Jamie ended." To meet her wishes as far as I could, the second part was written ; it is not so pleasing as the first : the loves and distresses of youth go more to the heart than the contritions, confessions, and legacies of old age ; my dread, however, of being named as an authoress still remaining, though I sung it to my mother, I gave her no copy of it, but her affection for me so impressed it on a memory, which [then] retained scarcely anything else, and she repeated it so often, with the pride of being the only person that had the power of doing so, that I think it very probable, by means of my mother's friend and constant companion, Mrs. Keith, some of the verses may have reached the hand of the author of "Waverley," as it was a subject of delight to her to boast of her intimacy with him. I have reason to know there exists a version of the second part from Jeanie's own lips, but that which has already been so highly honoured as to be placed where it is, shall for ever keep its ground with me, and the other shall remain in the corner of my portfolio.

Let me now once more, my dear Sir, entreat that you will prevail on the author of "Waverley" to accept, in testimony of my most grateful thanks, of the only copies of this ballad ever given under the hand of the writer ; and will *you* call here, I pray, when you come next to London, sending up your name that you may not be denied. You will then find the doors open wide to receive you, and two people will shake hands who are unacquainted with ennui,—the one being innocently

occupied from morning to night, the other with a splendid genius as his companion wherever he goes!

God bless you.

ANN BARNARD.

P.S.—I see that I have not mentioned the advice of the old laird of Dalzell's, who, when we were *tête-à-tête* afterwards, said, "My dear, the next time you sing that song, alter the line about the crown and the pound, and when you have said that 'saving ae crown piece, Jamie had naething else beside,' be sure you add 'to mak' it twenty merks my Jamie gaed to sea,'—for a Scottish pund, my dear, is but twenty pence, and Jamie was na siccan a gowk as to leave Jeanie and gang to sea to lessen his gear:—'twas that sentence,' he whispered 'telled me the song was written by some bonnie lassie that didna ken the nature o' the Scotch money as well as an auld writer in the town of Edinboro' would hae done."

I was delighted with the criticism of old Dalzell,—if it had occurred to the Antiquarian Society, it might have saved Mr. J—— the trouble of his visit; but, though I admit it would have been wiser to have corrected the error, I have never changed the pound note, which has always passed current in its original state.

MARY HOWITT (1799–1888)

NÉE Botham, was born at Coleford, Gloucestershire, and began to write while still a child. In 1821 she married William Howitt, who himself became an author of some repute. Mrs. Howitt's works, which comprise over a hundred, consist of translations, poems, and books of travel. Excepting

certain poems and books for children, few of her works have survived her day. The Howitts were originally Quakers, then Spiritualists, but Mary Howitt in 1882 became a Roman Catholic and died in Rome, where her latter years were spent.

To her Sister, Anna Harrison[1]

BYRON'S DEATH AND FUNERAL

[NOTTINGHAM] 7th Mo: 18, 1824.

. . . Poor Byron! I was grieved exceedingly at the tidings of his death; but when his remains arrived here, it seemed to make it almost a family sorrow. I wept then, for my heart was full of grief to think that fine, eccentric genius, that handsome man, the brave asserter of the rights of the Greeks, and the first poet of our time, he whose name will be mentioned with reverence and whose glory will be uneclipsed when our children shall have passed to dust: to think that he lay a corpse in an inn in this very town. Oh! Anna, I could not refrain from tears.

Byron's faithful, generous, undeviating friend, Hobhouse, who stood by him to the last, his friend through good and evil,—he only, excepting Byron's servants and the undertakers, came down to see the last rites paid. Hobhouse's countenance was pale, and strongly marked by mental suffering.

But to particulars. On fifth-day afternoon the hearse and mourning coaches came into Nottingham. In the evening the coffin lay in state. The crowd was

[1] The following letters by Mary Howitt are printed from her "Life and Correspondence," by kind permission of Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd.

immense. We went among the rest. I shall never forget it. The room was hung with black, with the escutcheons of the Byron family on the walls; it was lighted by six immense wax-candles, placed round the coffin in the middle of the room. The coffin was covered with crimson velvet richly ornamented with brass nails; on the top was a plate engraved with the titles and arms of Lord Byron. At the head of the coffin was placed a small chest containing an urn, which enclosed the heart and brains. Four pages stood, two on each side; visitors were admitted by twelves, and were to walk round only; but we laid our hands on the coffin. It was a moment of enthusiastic feeling to me. It seemed to me impossible that this wonderful man lay actually within that coffin. It was more like a dream than a reality.

Nottingham, which connects everything with politics, could not help making even the passing respect to our poet's memory a political question. He was a Whig; he hated priests, and was a lover of liberty; he was the author of "Don Juan" and "Cain." So the Tory party, which is the same as saying the gentry, would not notice even his coffin. The parsons had their feud, and therefore not a bell tolled either when he came or went. He was a lover of liberty, which the Radical Corporation here thought made him their brother; therefore all the rabble rout from every lane and alley, and garret and cellar, came forth to curse and swear, and shout and push, in his honour. All religious people forswore him, on account of his licentiousness and blasphemy; they forgot his "Childe Harold," his "Bride of Abydos," the "Corsair," and "Lara."

The next morning all the friends and admirers of Byron were invited to meet in the market-place to form a procession to accompany him out of town. Thou must have read in the papers of the funeral train that came from London. In addition to this were five gentleman's carriages, and perhaps thirty riders on horseback, besides Lord Rancliffe's tenantry, who made about thirty more, and headed the procession, and were by far the most respectable; for never, surely, did such a shabby company ride in the train of mountebanks or players. There was not one gentleman who would honour our immortal bard by riding two miles in his funeral train. The equestrians, instead of following two and two, as the paper says they did, most remarkably illustrated riding all sixes-and-sevens.

William, Charles, Thomas Knott, and that odd Smith (thou rememberest him) went to Hucknall to see the interment. It, like the rest, was the most disgraceful scene of confusion that can well be imagined, for from the absence of all persons of influence, or almost of respectability, the rude crowd of country clowns and Nottingham Goths paid no regard to the occasion, and no respect or decency was to be seen. William says it was almost enough to make Byron rise from the dead to see the scene of indecorum, and the poor, miserable place in which he lies, though it is the family burial vault.

That mad-headed, impetuous Smith was, like the rest, enraged at the want of respect, which was the most marked trait of the interment. Although he had that day walked in the heat of a broiling sun fourteen miles, he sat up and wrote a poem on the subject, which I send as a curiosity. He composed and copied it by

three o'clock in the morning, went and called up Sutton, very much to his displeasure, had it sent to press by six o'clock, and by nine had the verses ready for publication. Byron's servants took four-and-twenty copies, and seemed much delighted with it.

Is it not strange that such an unusual silence is maintained by the poets on the subject of his death? It reminds me of the Eastern custom of breaking all instruments of music in any overwhelming grief, or on the occasion of the death of some favourite. It seems a theme too painful for any but a master-touch, and he is gone that could best do justice to such a subject.

Mary Howitt to her Sister, Anna Harrison

THE VISIT TO LONDON

NOTTINGHAM, 12th Mo: 13th, 1829.

. . . Now, dear Anna, what wilt thou say when I tell thee William and I set out for London the day after to-morrow? My heart beats at this moment to think of it. I half dread it. I shall twenty times wish for our quiet fireside, where day by day we read and talk by ourselves, and nobody looks in upon us. I keep reasoning with myself that the people we shall see in London are but men and women, and, perhaps, after all, no better than ourselves. If we could, dear Anna, but divest our minds of *self*, as our dear father used to say we should do, it would be better and more comfortable for us. This is the only thing that casts a cloud on our proposed journey. In every other respect it is delightful, almost intoxicating. I recall to myself the old fame of London, its sublime position in

the world, its immensity, its interesting society, till I feel an impatient enthusiasm, which makes quite a child of me again. Think only, dear Anna, to hear the very hum of that immense place, to see from afar its dense cloud of smoke! These things, little and ordinary as they would be to many, would, I know, under particular circumstances, fill my eyes with tears and bring my heart into my throat till I could not say a word. But then to stand on Tower Hill, in Westminster Abbey, upon some old famous bridge, to see the marbles in the British Museum, the pictures in some of the fine galleries, or even to have before one's eyes some old grey wall in Eastcheap, or the Jewry, about which Shakespeare or some other worthy has made mention, will be to me a realisation of many a vision and speculation. We do not intend to stay more than a week, and thou mayst believe we shall have enough to do. We are to be with Alaric and Zillah Watts, and have to make special calls on the S. C. Halls, Dr. Bowring, the Pringles, and be introduced to their ramifications of acquaintances; Allan Cunningham, L. E. L. Martin the painter, and Thomas Roscoe, we are sure to see, and how many more I cannot tell.

Mary Howitt to her Sister, Anna Harrison

THE TASTE OF A QUAKERESS

NOTTINGHAM, *June* 14, 1830.

. . . Why, dear Anna, if thou feelst the disadvantage and absurdity of Friends' peculiarities, dost thou not abandon them? William has done so, and really

I am glad. He is a good Christian, and the change has made no difference in him, except for the better, as regards looks. I am amazed now how I could advocate the ungraceful cut of a Friend's coat; and if we could do the same, we should find ourselves religiously no worse, whatever Friends might think. I never wish to be representative to any meeting, or to hold the office of clerk or sub-clerk. All other privileges of the Society we should enjoy the same. But I am *nervous* on the subject. I should not like to wear a straw bonnet without ribbons; it looks so Methodistical; and with ribbons, I again say, I should be nervous. Besides, notwithstanding all his own changes, William likes a Friend's bonnet. In all other particulars of dress, mine is just in make the same as everybody else's. Anna Mary I shall never bring up in the payment of the tithe of mint and cummin; and I fancy Friends are somewhat scandalised at the unorthodox appearance of the little maiden. As to language, I could easily adopt that of our countrymen, but think with a Friend's bonnet it does not accord; and I like consistency. I quite look for the interference of some of our exact brothers or sisters on account of my writings; at least if they read the annuals next year, for I have a set of the most un-Friendly ballads in them. What does Daniel say about these things? I hope he does not grow rigid as he grows older.

I trust thou hast plenty of nice little shelves and odd nooks for good casts and knick-knacks. I love to see these things in a house, where they are well selected and used with discretion. Let us accustom our children to elegant objects, as far as our means permit. I think one might manage so that every common

jug and basin in the house were well moulded, with such curves as would not have offended the eye of an Athenian. There is much in the *forms* of things. I wish I had my time to live over again, for with my present knowledge, even in the buying of a brown pot I could do better. Thou wilt perhaps smile at this as folly, yet so fully am I impressed with its importance, that I point out to Anna Mary what appears to me good and what faulty. Morally and intellectually we must be better for studying perfection, and it consists of a great deal in outward forms. Even a child can soon perceive how in houses some things are chosen for their grotesqueness or picturesqueness, which is distinct from beauty. I do not know why I have written thus, for thou feelst these things just as much as I do.

Mary Howitt to her Sister, Anna Harrison

"OF MANY BOOKS"

NOTTINGHAM, *December* 26, 1830.

It is impossible to tell thee how I long for some mighty spirit to arise to give a new impulse to mind. I am tired of Sir Walter Scott and his imitators, and I am sickened of Mrs. Hemans's luscious poetry, and all her tribe of copyists. The libraries set in array one school against the other, and hurry out their trashy volumes before the ink of the manuscript is fairly dry. It is an abomination to my soul; not one in twenty could I read. Thus it is, a thousand books are published, and nine hundred and ninety are unreadable. Dost thou remember the days when Byron's poems came out first, now one, and then one, at sufficient

intervals to allow of digesting? And dost thou remember our first reading of "Lalla Rookh"? It was on a washing day. We read and clapped our clear-starching, read and clapped, read and clapped and read again, and all the time our souls were not on this earth. Ay, dear Anna, it was either being young or being unsurfeited which gave such glory to poetry in those days. And yet I do question whether, if "Lalla Rookh" were now first published, I could enjoy it as I did then. But of this I cannot judge; the idea of the poem is spoiled to me by others being like it. I long for an era, the outbreaking of some strong spirit who would open another seal. The very giants that rose in intellect at the beginning of the century—Southey, Coleridge, and Wordsworth—have become dwarfed. Many causes have conspired to make literature what it now is, a swarming but insignificant breed: one being the wretched, degraded state of criticism; another is the annuals, and, in fact, all periodical writing, which requires a certain amount of material, verse or prose, in a given time.

Mary Howitt to Father Paul Perkmann, O.S.B.

THE RECEPTION AT THE VATICAN

ROME, *January* 11, 1888.

I cannot allow myself to have all the blessings and enjoyments which yesterday afforded me without endeavouring to make you, at least in part, a sharer. For no one, I believe, would bear me more sympathetically in mind during that eventful morning than yourself.

It was a brilliant day, after wretchedly wet and

dreary weather, just as if Heaven were in perfect harmony with the desires of the English pilgrims, to the number of about five hundred.

Our friends, Mr. Alphonso and Miss Constantia Clifford, are here, you know, and this English deputation was under the conduct of their cousin, the Bishop of Clifton. Yesterday Mr. Clifford, as a private chamberlain, was in attendance on the Pope, it being considered in order that he, an Englishman, should be so on the occasion of the English deputation, at the head of which was, of course, the good Duke of Norfolk.

But though on duty and very much occupied, he made time to receive us at the private entrance, where we could immediately ascend by a lift, without any fatigue, into a warm, comfortable ante-room. Here we could rest till the time came for the interview. Various distinguished personages, whose names, high in the Church, were familiar to us, were moving about; and every now and then Mr. Clifford introduced us to them. In a while we were moved on, advancing perhaps through five or six rooms, all of which interested me greatly, nothing striking me more than the wonderful simplicity of the apartments; all similar and wholly without ornament or costly show. At length we were in the room immediately adjoining and opening into the Throne-room, where, it now being ten o'clock, the Holy Father had received the Bishops of the deputation. Here we heard the low, calm voice of the Holy Father addressing the various delegates, who one after the other knelt before him. We were about fifty ladies and a few gentlemen, just the first detachment which had been admitted, as it would have been impossible to receive the full number at once; and we were so favoured as to be

in this first detachment. I now discovered, with a little nervous trepidation that *I*, your poor old penitent, was to be honoured by first receiving the blessing after the delegates. But, to my infinite surprise and thankfulness, though I did feel a little bit startled, with a deep sense of my own unworthiness, I felt at the same time very calm and grateful, trusting that our dear Lord would indeed be with me. At length the moment came. Mr. Clifford and Mr. Hartwell Grissell were there, and I was within the doorway.

I saw the Holy Father seated, not on a throne, but on a chair, a little raised above the level of the floor; and the English Bishops, in their violet silk cloaks seated in two rows on either side of him. The gracious, most courteous Duke of Norfolk came forward and acknowledged us. This might last, perhaps, two minutes. Then Mr. Clifford led me forward to the Holy Father; Margaret, as my daughter, following with Miss Clifford. I never thought of myself. I was unconscious of everything. A serene happiness, almost joy, filled my whole being, as I at once found myself on my knees before the vicar of Christ. My wish was to kiss his foot, but it was withdrawn and his hand given me. You may think with what fervour I kissed the ring. In the meantime he had been told my age and my late conversion. His hands were laid on my shoulders, and again and again his right hand in blessing on my head, whilst he spoke to me of Paradise.

All this time I did not know whether I was in the body or not. I knew afterwards that I felt unspeakably happy, and with a sense of unwillingness to leave. How long it lasted—perhaps a minute or so—I know not, but I certainly was lifted into a high spiritual state of bliss,

such as I never had experience of before, and which now fills me with astonishment and deep thankfulness to recall. I woke in the stillness of last night with the sense of it upon me. It is wonderful. I hope I may never lose it.

On leaving the room I received from a monsignore in attendance, with the words that the Holy Father gave it me, a silver medal of himself in a small red case—a present which was made to others of the deputation.

The Duke of Norfolk, after this, very kindly led me out by another way of exit, and thus we could return home immediately, descending in the lift by which we had ascended.

LADY CAROLINE LAMB (1785–1828)

A DAUGHTER of the Earl of Bessborough, was married to William Lamb, afterwards Lord Melbourne. She wrote novels which gained her some celebrity, but she is chiefly remembered on account of her friendship with Lord Byron, which occasioned some comment, but ended in a quarrel. Her rank, accomplishments, and personal attractions enabled her to take a brilliant place in the fashionable society of the day. Lady Caroline on meeting the funeral procession of Lord Byron in 1824 became insensible; an illness followed, from which she never entirely recovered.

To Lady Morgan

"THE PILGRIM OF ETERNITY"

[NO DATE] 1826 (?).

No, no; not that portrait[1] out of my hands—I cannot bear; I will have it copied for you. I must take it with

1 This appears to be a portrait of Byron, which Lady Caroline left to Lady Morgan after her death.

me to Paris. Thank you, dear Lady Morgan, for your advice, but you do not understand me, and I do not wonder you cannot know me. I had purposed a very pretty little supper for you. I have permission to see all my friends here : it is not William's house ; besides, he said he wished me to see every one, and Lady —— called and asked me who I wished to see. I shall therefore shake hands with the whole Court Guide before I go. The only question I want you to solve is, shall I go abroad ? Shall I throw myself upon those who no longer want me, or shall I live a good sort of a half kind of life in some cheap street a little way off, viz. the City Road, Shoreditch, Camberwell, or upon the top of a shop,—or shall I give lectures to little children, and keep a seminary, and thus earn my bread ? or shall I write a kind of quiet everyday sort of novel, full of wholesome truths ? or shall I attempt to be poetical, and, failing, beg my friends for a guinea a-piece, and their name, to sell my work, upon the best foolscap paper ? or shall I fret, fret, fret, and die ? or shall I be dignified and fancy myself—as Richard the Second did when he picked the nettle up—upon a thorn ?

Sir Charles Morgan was most agreeable and good-natured. *Faustus* is good in its way, but has not all its sublimity ; it is like a rainy shore. I admire it because I conceive what I had *heard* translated elsewhere, but the end particularly is in very contemptible taste. The overture tacked to it is magnificent, the scenery beautiful, parts affecting, and not unlike Lord Byron, that dear, that angel, that misguided and misguiding Byron, whom I adore, although he left that dreadful legacy on me—my memory. Remember thee—and well.

I hope he and William will find better friends ; as

to myself, I never can love anything better than what I thus tell you;—William Lamb first, my mother second, Byron third, my boy fourth, my brother William fifth, my father and godmother sixth; my uncle and aunt, my cousin Devonshire, my brother Fred (myself), my cousins next, and last, my *petit* friend, young Russell, because he is my aunt's godson; because when he was but three I nursed him; because he has a hard-to-win, free, and kind heart; but chiefly because he stood by me when no one else did.

I am yours,

C. L.

Lady Caroline Lamb to Lady Morgan

RETROSPECTION

[No Date]

My dearest Lady,—As being a lady whom my adored mother loved, your kindness about "Ada Reis"[1] I feel the more, as everybody wishes to run down and suppress the vital spark of genius I have, and, in truth, it is but small (about what one sees a maid gets by excessive beating on a tinder-box). I am not vain, believe me, nor selfish, nor in love with my authorship; but I am independent, as far as a mite and a bit of dust can be. I thank God, being born with all the great names of England around me. I value them alone for what they dare do, and have done; and I fear nobody except the devil, who certainly has all along been very particular in his attentions to me, and has sent me as many baits as he did Job. I, however, am, happily for myself, in as ill a state of health as he was, so I trust in God I shall

[1] A fantastic Eastern tale by Lady Caroline Lamb, published in 1823.

ever more resist temptation. My history, if you ever care and like to read it, is this: My mother, having boys, wished ardently for a girl; and I, who evidently ought to have been a soldier, was found a naughty girl, forward, talking like Richard the Third.

I was a trouble, not a pleasure, all my childhood, for which reason, after my return from Italy, where I was from the age of four until nine, I was ordered by the late Dr. Ware neither to learn anything nor see any one, for fear the violent passions and strange whims they found in me should lead to madness; of which, however, he assured every one there were no symptoms. I differ; but the end was, that until fifteen I learned nothing. My instinct—for we all have instincts—was for music: in it I delighted; I cried when it was pathetic, and did all that Dryden's ode made Alexander do—of course I was not allowed to follow it up. My angel mother's ill-health prevented my living at home; my kind aunt Devonshire took me; the present Duke loved me better than himself, and every one paid me those compliments shown to children who are precious to their parents, or delicate and likely to die. I wrote not, spelt not; but I made verses, which they all thought beautiful: for myself, I preferred washing a dog, or polishing a piece of Derbyshire spar, or breaking in a horse, to any accomplishment in the world. Drawing-room (shall I say with-drawing-room, as they now say?), looking-glasses, finery, or dress-company for ever were my abhorrence. I was, I am, religious; I was loving (?), but I was and am unkind. I fell in love when only twelve years old, with a friend of Charles Fox—a friend of liberty whose poems I had read, whose self I had never seen, and when I did see him, at thirteen, could I change?

No; I was more attached than ever. William Lamb was beautiful, and far the cleverest person then about, and the most daring in his opinions, in his love of liberty and independence. He thought of me but as a child, yet he liked me much; afterwards he offered to marry me, and I refused him because of my temper, which was too violent; he, however, asked twice, and was not refused the second time, and the reason was that I adored him. I had three children; two died; my only child is afflicted: it is the will of God. I have wandered from right and been punished. I have suffered what you could hardly believe; I have lost my mother, whose gentleness and good sense guided me. I have received more kindness than I can ever repay. I have suffered also, but I deserved it. My power of mind and of body are gone; I am like the shade of what I was; to write was once my resource and pleasure; but since the only eyes that ever admired my most poor and humble production are closed, wherefore should I indulge the propensity? God bless you; I write from my heart. You are one like me, who, perhaps, have not taken the right road. I am on my death-bed; say, I might have died by a diamond, I die now by a brick-bat; but remember, the only noble fellow I ever met with is William Lamb; he is to me what Shore was to Jane Shore. I saw it once; I am as grateful, but as unhappy. Pray excuse the sorrows this sad, strange letter will cause you. Could you be in time I would be glad to see you—to you alone would I give up Byron's letters—much eke, but all like the note you have. Pray excuse this being not written as clearly as you can write. I speak as I hope you do, from the heart.

C. L.

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS (1793–1835)

Felicia Dorothea Browne began to write verse at a very early age, and a book of poems from her pen was published in her fifteenth year. She married in 1812. Her poems, which comprise many volumes, attained great popularity during her lifetime in England and America, but, save for those printed in Anthologies, are little known to the present generation.

To ——

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Chiefswood, *July* 20 [1829].

Whether I shall return to you all "brighter and happier," as your letter so kindly prophesies, I know not: but I think there is every prospect of my returning more fitful and wilful than ever; for here I am leading my own free native life of the hills again, and if I could but bring some of my friends, as the old ballads says, "near, near, *near* me," I should indeed enjoy it; but that strange solitary feeling which I cannot chase away, comes over me too often like a dark sudden shadow, bringing with it an utter indifference to all things around. I lose it most frequently, however, in the excitement of Sir Walter Scott's society. And with him I am now in constant intercourse, taking long walks over moor and woodland, and listening to song and legend of other times, until my mind quite forgets itself, and is carried wholly back to the days of the Slogan and the fiery cross, and the wild gatherings of border chivalry. I cannot say enough of his cordial kindness to me; it

makes me feel when at Abbotsford, as if the stately rooms of the proud ancestral-looking place, were old familiar scenes to me. Yesterday he made a party to show me the "pleasant banks of Yarrow," about ten miles from hence: I went with him in an open carriage, and the day was lovely, smiling upon us with a *real blue* sunny sky, and we passed through I know not how many storied spots, and the spirit of the master-mind seemed to call up sudden pictures from every knoll and cairn as we went by—so vivid were his descriptions of the things that had been. The *names* of some of those scenes had, to be sure, rather savage sounds; such as "*Slain Man's Lea*," "*Dead Man's Pool*," etc., etc.; but I do not know whether these strange titles did not throw a deeper interest over woods and waters now so brightly peaceful. We passed one meadow on which Sir Walter's grandfather had been killed in a duel; "had it been a century earlier," said he, "a bloody feud would have been transmitted to me, as Spaniards bequeath a game of chess to be finished by their children." And I do think, that had *he* lived in those earlier days, no man would have more enjoyed what Sir Lucius O'Trigger is pleased to call "*a pretty quarrel*"; the whole expression of his benevolent countenance changes if he has but to speak of the dirk or the claymore: you see the spirit that would "say amidst the trumpets, ha! ha!" suddenly flashing from his gray eyes, and sometimes, in repeating a verse of warlike minstrelsy, he will spring up as if he sought the sound of a distant gathering cry. But I am forgetting beautiful Yarrow, along the banks of which we walked through the Duke of Buccleugh's grounds, under old rich patrician trees; and at every turn of our path the mountain stream seemed to assume

a new character, sometimes lying under steep banks in dark transparence, sometimes

> crested with tawny foam,
> Like the mane of a chestnut steed.

And there was Sir Walter beside me, repeating, with a tone of feeling as deep as if *then* only first wakened—

> They sought him east, they sought him west,
> They sought him far with wail and sorrow;
> There was nothing seen but the coming night,
> And nothing heard but the roar of Yarrow.

It was all like a dream. Do you remember Wordsworth's beautiful poem "Yarrow visited"? I was ready to exclaim, in its opening words—"And is this Yarrow?"—There was nothing to disturb the deep and often solemn loveliness of the scenery: no *rose-coloured* spencers such as persecuted the unhappy Count Forbin amidst the pyramids—Mr. Hamilton, and Mrs. Lockhart, and the boys, who followed us, were our whole party; and the sight of shepherds, real, not Arcadian shepherds, sleeping under their plaids to shelter from the noon-day, carried me at once into the heart of a pastoral and mountain country. We visited Newark tower, where, amongst other objects that awakened many thoughts, I found the name of Mungo Park (who was a native of the Yarrow vale), which he had inscribed himself, shortly before leaving his own bright river never to return. We came back to Abbotsford, where we were to pass the remainder of the day, partly along the Ettrick, and partly *through* the Tweed; on the way, we were talking of trees, in his love for which Sir Walter is a perfect Evelyn. I mentioned to him what I once spoke of to you, the different sounds they give forth

to the wind, which he had observed, and he asked me if I did not think that an union of music and poetry, varying in measure and expression, might in some degree imitate or represent those "voices of the trees"; and he described to me some Highland music of a similar imitative character, called the "notes of the sea-birds" barbaric notes truly they must be!—In the evening we had a good deal of music: he is particularly fond of national airs, and I played him many, for which I wish you had heard how kindly and gracefully he thanked me. But, O! the bright swords! I must not forget to tell you how I sat, like Minna in "The Pirate" (though *she* stood or moved, I believe), the very "queen of swords." I have the strongest love for the flash of glittering steel—and Sir Walter brought out I know not how many gallant blades to show me; one which had fought at Killicrankie, and one which had belonged to the young Prince Henry, James the First's son, and one which looked of as noble race and temper as that with which Cœur de Lion severed the block of steel in Saladin's tent. What a number of things I have yet to tell you! I feel sure that my greatest pleasure from all these new objects of interest will arise from talking them over with you when I return. . . .

Ever faithfully yours,

F. H.

Felicia Dorothea Hemans to ——

WORDSWORTH

RYDAL MOUNT, *June* 24, 1830.

I am charmed with Mr. Wordsworth, whose kindness to me has quite a soothing influence over my spirits. Oh! what relief, what blessing there is in the feeling of

admiration, when it can be freely poured forth! "There is a daily beauty in his life," which is in such lovely harmony with his poetry, that I am thankful to have witnessed and *felt* it. He gives me a good deal of his society, reads to me, walks with me, leads my pony when I ride, and I begin to talk with him as with a sort of *paternal* friend. The whole of this morning he kindly passed in reading to me a great deal from Spenser, and afterwards his own "Laodamia," my favourite "Tintern Abbey," and many of those noble sonnets which you, like myself, enjoy so much. His reading is very peculiar, but, to my ear, delightful; slow, solemn, *earnest* in expression more than any I have ever heard: when he reads or recites in the open air, his deep rich tones seem to proceed from a spirit-voice, and belong to the religion of the place; they harmonise so fitly with the thrilling tones of woods and waterfalls. His expressions are often strikingly poetical: "I would not give up the mists that *spiritualise* our mountains for all the blue skies of Italy." Yesterday evening he walked beside me as I rode on a long and lovely mountain-path high above Grasmere Lake. I was much interested by his showing me, carved deep into the rock, as we passed, the initials of his wife's name, inscribed there many years ago by himself, and the dear old man, like "Old Mortality," renews them from time to time; I could scarcely help exclaiming *Esto perpetua*! . . .

Felicia Dorothea Hemans to ——

PAGANINI

. . . To begin with the appearance of the "foreign wonder,"—it is very different from what the indiscrimi-

nating newspaper accounts would lead you to suppose: he is certainly singular-looking ; pale, slight, and with long, neglected hair ; but I saw nothing whatever of that *wild fire*, that almost ferocious inspiration of mien, which has been ascribed to him ; indeed I thought the expression of his countenance rather that of good-natured and mild *enjouement*, than of anything else,—and his bearing altogether simple and natural. His first performance consisted of a tema, with variations, from the beautiful *Preghiera* in "Mose" : here I was rather disappointed, but merely because he did not play alone. I suppose the performance on the single string required the support of other instruments ; but he occasionally drew from that string a tone of wailing, *heart-piercing* tenderness, almost too much to be sustained by any one whose soul can give the full response. It was not, however, till his second performance, on all the strings, that I could form a full idea of his varied magic. A very delicate accompaniment on the piano did not in the least interfere with the singleness of effect in this instance. The subject was the Venetian air, "Come to me when day-light sets"—how shall I give you a idea of all the versatility, *the play of soul*, embodied in the variations upon that simple air ? Imagine a passage of the most fairy-like delicacy, more aerial than you would suppose it possible for human touch to produce, suddenly succeeded by an absolute *parody* of itself ; the same notes repeated with an expression of absolute comic humour, which forced me to laugh, however reluctantly—it was as if an old man, the "Ancient Mariner" himself, were to sing an impassioned Italian air, in a snoring voice, after Pasta. Well, after one of these sudden travesties, for I can call them

nothing else, the *creature* would look all around him, with an air of the most delighted *bonhomie*, exactly like a witty child, who has just accomplished a piece of successful mischief. The *pizzicato* passages were also wonderful; the indescribably rapid notes seemed *flung* out in *sparks* of music, with a triumphant glee which conveys the strongest impression I ever received of Genius rejoicing over its own bright creations. But I vainly wish that my words could impart to you a full conception of this wizard-like music.

There was nothing else of particular interest in the evening's performance; —a good deal of silvery warbling from Stockhausen, but I never find it leave any more vivid remembrance on my mind than the singing of birds. I am wrong, however,—I must except one thing, "Napoleon's Midnight Review,"—the music of which, by Neukomm, I thought superb. The words are translated from the German: they describe the hollow sound of a drum at midnight, and the peal of a ghostly trumpet arousing the dead hosts of Napoleon from their sleep under the northern snows, and along the Egyptian sands, and in the sunny fields of Italy. Then another trumpet-blast, and the chief himself arises, "with his martial cloak around him," to review the whole army; and thus it concludes—"the password given is—*France*; the answer—*St. Helene*." The music, which is of a very wild, supernatural character, a good deal in Weber's *incantation* style, accords well with this grand idea; the single trumpet, followed by a long, rolling, ominous sound from the double-drum made me quite thrill with indefinable feelings. Braham's singing was not equal to the instrumental part, but he did not disfigure it by his customary and *vulgarising* graces. . . . I enclose

you a programme of the concert at which I again heard this triumphant music last night. It is impossible for me to describe how much of intense feeling its full-swelling, dreamy tones awoke within me. His second performance (the *Adagio a doppie corde*) made me imagine that I was then *first* wakening in what a German would call the "music land." Its predominant expression was that of overpowering, passionate regret; such, at least, was the dying languor of the long *sostenuto* notes, that it seemed as if the musician was himself about to let fall his instrument, and sink under the mastery of his own emotion. It reminded me, by some secret and strange analogy, of a statue I once described to you, representing Sappho about to drop her lyre in utter desolation of heart. This was immediately followed by the rapid *flashing* music—for the strings were as if they sent out lightning in their glee—of the most joyous rondo by Kreutzer you can imagine. The last piece, the "Dance of the Witches," is a complete exemplification of the grotesque in music—some parts of it imitate the quavering, garrulous voices of very old women, half scolding, half complaining—and then would come a burst of wild, fantastic, half-fearful gladness. I think Burns's "Tam O'Shanter" (not Mr. Thom's—by way of contrast to Sappho) something of a parallel in poetry to this strange production in music. I saw more of Paganini's countenance last night, and was still more pleased with it than before; the original mould in which it has been cast is of a decidedly fine and intellectual character, though the features are so worn by the wasting fire which appears his vital element. . . . I did not hear Paganini again after the performance I described to you, but I received a very eloquent descrip-

tion from —— of a subsequent triumph of his genius. It was a concerto, of a dramatic character, and intended, as I was told, to embody the little tale of a wanderer sinking to sleep in a solitary place at midnight. He is supposed to be visited by a solemn and impressive vision, imagined in music of the most thrilling style. Then, after all his lonely fears and wild fantasies, the day-spring breaks upon him in a triumphant rondo, and all s joy and gladness. . . .

. . . —— related to me a most interesting conversation he had held with Paganini in a private circle. The latter was describing to him the sufferings (do you remember a line of Bryon's,

The starry Galileo, with his woes?)

by which he pays for his consummate excellence. He scarcely knows what sleep is, and his nerves are wrought to such almost preternatural acuteness, that harsh, even common sounds, are often torture to him: he is sometimes unable to bear a whisper in his room. His passion for music he described as an all-absorbing, a *consuming* one; in fact, he looks as if no other life than that ethereal one of melody were circulating within his veins: but he added, with a glow of triumph kindling through deep sadness, "*Mais c'est un don du ciel!*" I heard all this, which was no more than I had fully imagined, with a still deepening conviction that it is the gifted beyond all others—those whom the multitude believe to be rejoicing in their own fame, strong in their own resources—who have most need of true hearts to rest upon, and of hope in God to support them." . . .

JOANNA BAILLIE (1762–1851)

POETESS, was the daughter of a Professor of Divinity in Glasgow. At the age of 44, in 1806, she settled, with her sister Agnes, at Hampstead, where she remained until her death. Her nine Plays on the Passions are considered her greatest achievement; she wrote a tragedy entitled *De Montfort*, which was produced at Drury Lane, Mrs. Siddons and Kemble playing the leading parts. Miss Baillie was a general favourite and won the admiration of all her literary friends, amongst whom was Sir Walter Scott, a great admirer of her beautiful ballads.

To Samuel Rogers[1]

FRIENDLY CRITICISM

HAMPSTEAD, *Friday, February 2* [1832].

MY DEAR MR. ROGERS,—You once called me, and not very long ago, an ungrateful hussey, and I remember it the better because I really thought I deserved it. But whether I did or not, when I tell you now that I have read Sir John Herschell's book twice, or rather three times over, have been the better for it both in understanding and heart, and mean to read parts of it again ere long, you will not repent having bestowed it upon me. And now I mean to thank you for another obligation that you are not so well aware of. Do you remember when I told you, a good while since, of my intention of looking over all my works to correct them for an edition to be published after my decease, should

[1] This letter is reprinted from Mr. P. W. Clayden's "Rogers and his Contemporaries," by kind permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.

it be called for, and you giving me a hint never to let a *which* stand where a *that* might serve the purpose, to prefer the words *while* to *whilst*, *among* to *amongst*, etc. ? I acquiesced in all this most readily, throwing as much scorn upon the rejected expressions as anybody would do, and with all the ease of one who from natural taste had always avoided them. If you do, you will guess what has been my surprise and mortification to find through whole pages of even my last dramas, " whiches," " whilsts " and " amongsts," etc., where they need not have been, in abundance. Well, I have profited by your hint, though I was not aware that I needed it at the time when it was given, and now I thank you for it very sincerely. I cannot imagine how I came to make this mistake, if it had not been that, in writing songs, I have often rejected the words in question because they do not sound well in singing. I have very lately finished my corrections, and now all my literary tasks are finished. It is time they should, and more serious thoughts fill up their room, or ought to do.

I hear of your sister from time to time by our neighbours here, and of yourself now and then. I hope you continue to have this variable winter with impunity. We also hear that your nephew continues to recover, though more slowly than his friends could wish. Being so young a man gives one confidence in the progress he makes. My sister and I are both confined to the house, but with no very great ailments to complain of. We both unite in all kind wishes and regards to you and Miss Rogers.

Very truly and gratefully yours,

J. Baillie.

HARRIET MARTINEAU (1802–1876)

BORN at Norwich, she began her literary career in 1821 with an article for the *Monthly Repository*, and some short stories. By 1832 she had an assured position as a writer on political economy, novels, and stories for children; but her most ambitious work was the "History of England during the Thirty Years Peace, 1816–46." Miss Martineau contributed to *The Daily News* from 1852–66, and to other papers and periodicals. She was democratic in her opinions and a believer in the intellectual powers of her own sex. She died at Ambleside, where she resided for many years.

To Mrs. Chapman [1]

THE FUTURE OF WOMEN

DEAR FRIEND,—I have seen Garrison; and among all the pleasures of this meeting I seem to have been brought nearer to you. If I were well and had health, and if my mother's life were not so fast bound down to mine as it is, I think I could not help coming to live beside you. Great *ifs* and many of them. But I dream of a life devoted to you and your cause, and the very dream is cheering. I have not been out of these rooms for months, and now I begin to doubt whether I shall ever again step across their threshold. I may go on just as I am, for years, and it may end any day; yet I am not worse than when I last wrote.

We had a happy day, we four, when Garrison was here. I am sure he was happy. How gay he is! He left us with a new life in us.

[1] Reprinted from Harriet Martineau's "Autobiography," by the kind permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.

Garrison was quite right, I think, to sit in the gallery at Convention. I conclude you think so. It has done much for the woman question, I am persuaded. You will live to see a great enlargement of our scope, I trust; but what with the vices of some women and the fears of others, it is hard work for us to assert our liberty. I will, however, till I die, and so will you, and so make it easier for some few to follow us than it was for poor Mary Wollstonecraft to begin. . . .

Believe me ever your faithful and affectionate

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

SARA COLERIDGE (1802–1852)

THE only daughter of Samuel Taylor Coleridge; she married, in 1829, her cousin, Henry Nelson Coleridge. Her works consist of an essay on "Rationalism," an Introduction to her father's "Biographia Literaria," also a fairy tale "Phantasmion," and "Pretty Lessons for Good Children."

To her Husband[1]

A MOTHER'S PORTRAIT

NAB COTTAGE, GRASMERE [1833].

. . . . You say you cannot bring before your mind's eye our little Herby. A mother is qualified to draw a child's portrait, if close study of the original be a qualification. High colouring may be allowed for. I will try to give you some notion of our child. He

[1] The following letters of Mrs. Coleridge are reprinted, from her Memoirs and Letters, edited by her daughter, by permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd.

is too even a mixture of both father and mother to be strikingly like either; and this is the more natural, as Henry and I have features less definite than our expressions. This may, perhaps, account for the flowing softness and more than childlike indefiniteness of outline which our boy's face presents; it is all colour and expression—such varying expression as consists with the sort of corporeal moulding which I have described, in which the vehicle is lost sight of, and the material of the veil is obscured by the brightness of what shines through it—not that pointed sort of fixed expression which seems more mechanically formed by strong lines and angular features. To be more particular, he has round eyes, and a round nose, and round lips and cheeks; and he has deep blue eyes, which vary from stone-grey to skiey azure, according to influences of light and shade; and yellowish light-brown hair, and cheeks and lips rosy up to the very deepest, brightest tint of childish rosyhood. He will not be a handsome man, but he is a pretty representative of three years old, as D—— was a "representative baby;" and folks who put the glossy side of their opinions outermost for the gratified eyes of mothers and nurses, and all that large class with whom rosy cheeks are beginning, middle, and end of beauty say enough to make me—as vain as I am. I don't pretend to any exemption from the general lot of parental delusion: I mean that, like most other parents, I see my child through an atmosphere which illuminates, magnifies, and at the same time refines the object to a degree that amounts to a delusion, at least, unless we are aware that to other eyes it appears by the light of common day only. My father says that those who

love intensely see more clearly than indifferent persons; they see minutenesses which escape other eyes; they see "the very pulse of the machine." Doubtless; but then, don't they magnify them by looking through the medium of their own partiality? Don't they raise into undue relative importance by exclusive gazing; don't wishes and hopes, indulged and cherished long, turn into realities, as the rapt astronomer gazed upon the stars, and mused on human knowledge, and longed for magic power, till he believed that he directed the sun's course and the sweet influences of the Pleiades?

To return to our son and heir; he is an impetuous, vivacious child, and the softer moments of such are particularly touching (so thinks the mother of a vehement urchin). I lately asked him the meaning of a word; he turned his rosy face to the window, and cast up the full blue eyes, which looked liquid in the light, in the short hush of childish contemplation. The innocent thoughtfulness, contrasted with his usual noisy mirth and rapidity, struck my fancy. I had never before seen him condescend to make an effort at recollection. The word usually passed from his lips like an arrow from a bow; and if not forthcoming instantly there was an absolute unconcern as to its fate in the region of memory. The necessity of brain-racking is not among the number of his discoveries in the (to him) new world. All wears the freshness and the glory of a dream; and the stale, flat, and unprofitable, and the *improbus labor*, and the sadness and despondency, are all behind that visionary haze which hides the dull reality, the mournful future of man's life. You may well suppose that I look on our darling boy with many fears; but "fortitude and patient

cheer" must recall me from such "industrious folly,' and faith and piety must tell me that this is not to be his home for ever, and that the glories of this world are lent but to spiritualise us to incite us to look upward ; and that the trials which I dread for my darling are but part of his Maker's general scheme of goodness and wisdom.

Sara Coleridge to her Eldest Brother

WOMEN AND BOOKS

January 1840.

I have a strong opinion that a *genuine* love of books is one of the greatest blessings of life for man and woman, and I cannot help thinking that by persons in our middle station it may be enjoyed (more at one time, less at another, but certainly during the course of life to a great extent enjoyed) without neglect of any duty. A woman *may* house-keep if she chooses, from morning to night, or she may be constantly at her needle, or she may be always either receiving or preparing for company ; but whatever those who practise these things may say, it is not necessary in most cases for a woman to spend her *whole* time in this manner. Now I cannot but think that the knowledge of the ancient languages very greatly enchances the pleasure taken in literature—that it gives depth and variety to reading, and makes almost every book, in whatever language, more thoroughly understood. I observe that music and drawing are seldom pursued after marriage. In many cases of weak health they cannot be pursued, and they do not tell in the intercourse of society and in conversation as this sort of informa-

tion does, even when not a word of Greek or Latin is either uttered or alluded to.

JANE WELSH CARLYLE (1801–1866)

HEIRESS and only daughter of Dr. John Welsh, she was known as "The Flower of Haddington," and in 1826 became the wife of Thomas Carlyle. Mrs. Carlyle possessed a keen intellect, and was undoubtedly of the greatest help to her husband, who always sought her advice in connection with his literary work. Her tragically sudden death occurred whilst driving in the Park.

To Mrs. Thomas Carlyle, sen. [1]

NEW FASHIONS

CHELSEA, *November* 1834.

. . . The weather is grown horribly cold, and I am chiefly intent, at present, on getting my winter wardrobe into order. I have made up the old black gown (which was dyed puce for me at Dumfries) with my own hands; it looks twenty per cent. better than when it was new; and I shall get no other this winter. I am now turning my pelisse. I went yesterday to a milliner's to buy a bonnet; an old, very ugly lady, upwards of seventy, I am sure, was bargaining about a cloak at the same place; it was a fine affair of satin and velvet; but she declared repeatedly that "it had *no air*," and for her part she could not put on such a thing. My bonnet, I flatter myself, has an *air*; a little brown feather nods

[1] The following letters of Mrs. Carlyle are reprinted from her Correspondence by kind permission of Mr. Alexander Carlyle and of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.

JANE BAILLIE WELSH

(MRS. CARLYLE)

From the miniature by Kenneth Macleay (painted in July 1826), by permission of Mr. Alexander Carlyle.

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over the front of it, and the crown points like a sugar-loaf! The diameter of the fashionable ladies at present is about three yards; their bustles are the size of an ordinary sheep's fleece. The very servant-girls wear bustles! Eliza Miles told me a maid of theirs went out one Sunday with three kitchen dusters pinned on as a substitute. . . .

Jane Welsh Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle

A POET'S PRIVILEGES

CHELSEA, *October* 12, 1835.

. . . Mother and I have fallen naturally into a fair division of labour, and we keep a very tidy house. Sereetha has attained the unhoped-for perfection of getting up at half after six of her own accord, lighting the parlour fire, and actually placing the breakfast things (*nil desperandum me duce!*). I get up at half after seven, and prepare the coffee and bacon-ham (which is the life of me, making me always hungrier the more I eat of it). Mother, in the interim, makes her bed and sorts her room. After breakfast, mother descends to the inferno, where she jingles and scours, and from time to time scolds Sereetha till all is right and tight there. I, above stairs, sweep the parlour, blacken the grate—make the room look cleaner than it has been since the days of Grace Macdonald[1]; then mount aloft to make my own bed (for I was resolved to enjoy the privilege of having a bed of my own); then clean myself (as the servants say), and sit down to the Italian lesson. A bit of meat roasted at the oven

[1] A former servant.

suffices two days cold, and does not plague us with cookery. Sereetha can fetch up tea-things, and the porridge is easily made on the parlour-fire ; the kitchen one being allowed to go out (for economy), when the Peesweep [1] retires to bed at eight o'clock. . . . Our visiting has been confined to one dinner and two teas at the Sterlings', and a tea at [Leigh] Hunt's. You must know, —— came the day after you went, and stayed two days. As she desired above all things to see Hunt, I wrote him a note, asking if I might bring her up to call. He replied he was just setting off to town, but would look in at eight o'clock. I supposed this, as usual, a mere off-put ; but he actually came—found Pepoli as well as Miss ——, was amazingly lively, and very lasting, for he stayed till near twelve. Between ourselves, it gave me a poorish opinion of him, to see how uplifted to the third heaven he seemed by ——'s compliments and sympathising talk. He asked us all, with enthusiasm, to tea the following Monday. —— Came on purpose, and slept here. He sang, talked like a pen-gun, ever to ——, who drank it all in like nectar, while my mother looked cross enough, and I had to listen to the whispered confidences of Mrs. Hunt. But for me, who was declared to be grown "quite prim and elderly," I believe they would have communicated their mutual experiences in a retired window-seat till morning. "God bless you, Miss ——," was repeated by Hunt three several times in tones of ever-increasing pathos and tenderness, as he handed her downstairs behind me. ——, for once in her life, seemed past speech. At the bottom of the stairs a demur took place. I saw nothing ; but I heard, with my wonted glegness—

[1] Peewit.

what think you?—a couple of handsome smacks! and then an almost inaudibly soft "God bless you, Miss ——!"

Now just remember what sort of looking woman is ——; and figure their transaction! If he had kissed me, it would have been intelligible, but ——, of all people! . . .

You will come back strong and cheerful, will you not? I wish you were come anyhow. Don't take much castor; eat plenty of chicken broth rather. Dispense my love largely. Mother returns your kiss with interest. We go on tolerably enough; but she has vowed to hate all my people except Pepoli. So that there is ever a "dark brown shadd" in all my little reunions. She has given me a glorious black velvet gown, realising my *beau idéal* of Putz!

Did you take away my folding penknife? We are knifeless here. We were to have gone to Richmond to-day with the Silver-headed, but to my great relief, it turned out that the steamboat is not running.

God keep you, my own dear husband, and bring you safe back to me. The house looks very empty without you, and my mind feels empty too.

Your JANE.

Jane Welsh Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle

THE DELAYED LETTER

SEAFORTH, *Tuesday, July* 14, 1846.

Oh! my dear Husband, Fortune has played me such a cruel trick this day! But it is all right now; and I do not even feel any resentment against Fortune for the

suffocating misery of the last two hours. I know always, even when I seem to you most exacting, that whatever happens to me is nothing like so bad as I deserve. But you shall hear all how it was.

. . . Not a line from you on my Birthday — on the fifth day! I did not burst out crying—did not faint—did not *do* anything absurd, so far as I know, but I walked back again, without speaking a word; and with such a tumult of wretchedness in my heart as you who know me can conceive. And then I shut myself in my own room to fancy everything that was most tormenting. Were you, finally, so out of patience with me that you had resolved to write to me no more at all? Had you gone to Addiscombe, and found no leisure there to remember my existence? Were you taken ill, so ill that you *could* not write? That last idea made me mad to get off to the railway, and back to London. Oh, mercy! what a two hours I had of it! And just when I was at my wit's end, I heard Julia crying out thro' the house: "Mrs. Carlyle, Mrs. Carlyle! are you there? Here is a letter for you!" And so there was after all! The post-mistress had overlooked it, and given it to Robert, when he went afterwards, not knowing that we had been. I wonder what *Love-letter* was ever received with such th nkfulness! Oh, my Dear! I am not fit for living in the world with this organisation. I am as much broken to pieces by that little accident as if I had come thro' an attack of cholera or typhus fever. I cannot even steady my hand to *write* decently. But I felt an irresistible need of thanking you, by return of post. Yes, I have kissed the dear little Card-case;

and now I will lie down a while, and try to get some sleep, at least to quieten myself. I will try to believe —oh, why cannot I believe it, once for all —that, with all my faults and follies, I *am* "dearer to you than any earthly creature!" I will be better for Geraldine here; she is become very quiet and nice, and as affectionate for me as ever.

Your own
JANE CARLYLE.

Jane Welsh Carlyle to Mrs. Russell

HOME DRESSMAKING

5, CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA, *Friday, January* 28, 1860.

DEAREST MARY—A letter from me would have crossed yours (with the book) on the road, if it hadn't been for a jacket! Things are so oddly hooked together in this world. The connection in this case is simple enough. I needed a little jacket for home wear, and possessing a superfluous black silk scarf, I resolved, in a moment of economical enthusiasm, to make with my own hands a jacket out of it. For in spite of the "thirty thousand distressed needlewomen" one hears so much of, the fact remains that nobody can get a decent article of dress made here, unless at enormous cost. And besides, the dressmakers who can fit one won't condescend to make anything but with their own materials. So I fell to cutting out that jacket last Monday, and only finished it to-day (Friday)! and was so much excited over the unusual nature of the enterprise (for I detest sewing, and don't sew for weeks together) that I could not leave off, for anything that could be postponed, till the jacket was

out of hands. But, Lord preserve me, what a bother; better to have bought one ready-made at the dearest rate. I won't take a needle in my hands, except to sew on Mr. C.'s buttons, for the next six months. By the way, would you like the shape of my jacket, which is of the newest? I have it on paper, and could send it to you quite handy.

Oh, my dear, I am very much afraid the reading of that book will be an even more uncongenial job of work for me than the jacket, and won't have as much to show for itself when done. If there be one thing I dislike more than theology it is geology. And here we have both, beaten up in the same mortar, and incapable, by any amount of beating, to coalesce. What could induce any live woman to fall a-writing that sort of book? And a decidedly clever woman—I can see that much from the little I have already read of it here and there. She expresses her meaning very clearly and elegantly too. If it were only on any subject I could get up an interest in, I should read her writing with pleasure. But even when Darwin, in a book that all the scientific world is in ecstasy over, proved the other day that we are all come from shell-fish, it didn't move me to the slightest curiosity whether we are or not. I did not feel that the slightest light would be thrown on my practical life for me, by having it ever so logically made out that my first ancestor, millions of millions of ages back, had been, or even had not been, an oyster. It remained a plain fact that *I* was no oyster, nor had no grandfather oyster within my knowledge: and for the rest, there was nothing to be gained, for this world, or the next, by going into the oyster-question, till all more-pressing

questions were exhausted! So—if I can't read Darwin, it may be feared I shall break down in Mrs. Duncan. Thanks to you, however, for the book, which will be welcome to several of my acquaintances. There is quite a mania for geology at present, in the female mind. My next-door neighbour would prefer a book like Mrs. Duncan's to Homer's "Iliad" or Milton's "Paradise Lost." There is no accounting for tastes.

I have done my visit to the Grange and got no hurt by it; and it was quite pleasant while it lasted. The weather was mild, and besides, the house is so completely warmed, with warm-water pipes, that it is like summer there in the coldest weather. The house was choke-ful of visitors—four-and-twenty of us, most of the time. And the toilettes! Nothing could exceed their magnificence; for there were four young, new-married ladies, among the rest, all vieing with each other who to be finest. The blaze of diamonds, every day at dinner, quite took the shine out of the chandeliers. As for myself, I got through the dressing-part of the business by a sort of continuous miracle, and after the first day, had no bother with myself of any sort. The Lady was kindness' self and gave general satisfaction.

Affectionately yours,

JANE CARLYLE.

COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON (1789–1849)

DAUGHTER of Edward Power, an Irish squire; in 1817 she married the Earl of Blessington. Her rank, beauty, and accomplishments soon made her the centre of a brilliant circle, both on the Continent, where she toured with her

husband, or at Gore House, where she lavishly entertained her friends. While abroad she met and became a friend of Byron, and later wrote her recollections in the work "Conversations with Lord Byron." After her husband's death she wrote novels, edited the Annual, "Book of Beauty," and made a large income from their proceeds. Her extravagance obliged her to leave Gore House, and in 1849 she settled in Paris, where she died the same year.

To Walter Savage Landor

FRIENDSHIP

Thursday Evening [1835].

I send you the engraving, and have only to wish that it may sometimes remind you of the original. You are associated in my memory with some of my happiest days; you were the friend, and the highly valued friend, of my dear and lamented husband, and as such, even without any of the numberless claims you have to my regard, you could not be otherwise than highly esteemed. If appears to me that I have not quite lost him who made life dear to me, when I am near those he loved, and that knew how to value him. Five fleeting years have gone by since our delicious evenings on the lovely Arno, evenings never to be forgotten, and the recollections of which ought to cement the friendships then formed. This effect, I can in truth say, has been produced on me, and I look forward, with confidence, to keeping alive, by a frequent correspondence, the friendship you owe me, no less for that I feel for you, but as the widow of one you loved, and that truly loved you. We, or, more properly speaking, I, live in a world where friendship is

little known: and were it not for one or two individuals like yourself I might be tempted to exclaim with Socrates, "My friends; there are no friends!" Let us prove that the philosopher was wrong, and if Fate has denied the comfort of meeting, let us by letters keep up our friendly intercourse. You will tell me what you think and feel in your Tuscan retirement, and I will tell you what I do, in this modern Babylon, where thinking and feeling are almost unknown. Have I not reason to complain, that in your sojourn in London you did not give me a single day? And yet methinks you promised to stay a week, and that of that week I should have my share. I rely on your promise of coming to see me again before you leave London, and I console myself for the disappointment of seeing so little of you, by recollecting the welcome and the happiness that wait you at home. Long may you enjoy it, is the sincere wish of your attached friend.

P.S.—I shall be glad to hear what you think of the M. Blessington "Conversations." I could have made them better, but they would no longer have been, as they now are, genuine.

ELIZABETH CLEGHORN GASKELL (1810–1865)

was born at Chelsea, the daughter of a Mr. Stevenson. She spent her early years at Knutsford (the original of her Cranford). At the age of twenty-two she married William Gaskell, a Unitarian minister at Manchester, and in 1848 she began her literary career with the publication of her story, "Mary Barton," which was rapidly followed by her other well-known novels, and in 1857 her famous biography of Charlotte Brontë.

To a Friend

CHARLOTTE BRONTË AT HAWORTH

[*September* 1853.]

It was a dull, drizzly, Indian-inky day all the way on the railroad to Keighley, which is a rising wool-manufacturing town, lying in a hollow between hills—not a pretty hollow, but more what the Yorkshire people call a "bottom," or "botham." I left Keighley in a car for Haworth, four miles off—four tough, steep, scrambling miles, the road winding between the wave-like hills that rose and fell on every side of the horizon, with a long, illimitable, sinuous look, as if they were a part of the line of the Great Serpent which the Norse legend says girdles the world. The day was lead-coloured; the road had stone factories alongside of it; grey, dull-coloured rows of stone cottages belonging to these factories; and then we came to poor, hungry-looking fields—stone fences everywhere, and trees nowhere. Haworth is a long, straggling village: one steep narrow street—so steep that the flagstones with which it is paved are placed endways, that the horses' feet may have something to cling to, and not slip down backwards. which if they did they would soon reach Keighley. But if the horses had cats' feet and claws they would do all the better. Well, we (the man, horse, car, and I) clambered up this street, and reached the church dedicated to St. Autest (who was he?); then we turned off into a lane on the left, past the curate's lodging at the sexton's, past the schoolhouse, up to the Parsonage yard-door. I went round the house to the front door, looking to the church;—moors everywhere, beyond and above. The crowded graveyard surrounds

the house and small grass enclosure for drying clothes.

I don't know that I ever saw a spot more exquisitely clean ; the most dainty place for that I ever saw. To be sure the life is like clockwork. No one comes to the house ; nothing disturbs the deep repose ; hardly a voice is heard ; you catch the ticking of the clock in the kitchen, or the buzzing of a fly in the parlour, all over the house. Miss Brontë sits alone in her parlour, breakfasting with her father in his study at nine o'clock. She helps in the housework ; for one of their servants (Tabby) is nearly ninety, and the other only a girl. Then I accompanied her in her walks on the sweeping moors : the heather bloom had been blighted by a thunderstorm a day or two before, and was all of a livid brown colour, instead of the blaze of purple glory it ought to have been. Oh ! those high, wild, desolate moors, up above the whole world, and the very realms of silence ! Home to dinner at two. Mr. Brontë has his dinner sent into him. All the small table arrangements had the same dainty simplicity about them. Then we rested, and talked over the clear, bright fire ; it is a cold country, and the fires gave a pretty warm, dancing light all over the house. The parlour has been evidently refurnished within the last few years, since Miss Brontë's success has enabled her to have a little more money to spend. Everything fits into, and is in harmony with, the idea of a country parsonage, possessed by people of very moderate means. The prevailing colour of the room is crimson, to make a warm setting for the cold grey landscape without. There is her likeness by Richmond, and an engraving from Lawrence's picture of Thackeray ; and two recesses, on each side of the high, narrow, old-

fashioned mantelpiece, filled with books—books given to her, books she has bought, and which tell of her individual pursuits and tastes ; *not* standard books.

She cannot see well, and does little beside knitting. The way she weakened her eyesight was this : When she was sixteen or seventeen, she wanted much to draw ; and she copied niminipimini copper-plate engravings out of annuals ("stippling," don't the artists call it ?), every little point put in, till at the end of six months she had produced an exquisitely faithful copy of the engraving. She wanted to learn to express her ideas by drawing. After she had tried to *draw* stories, and not succeeded, she took the better mode of writing, but in so small a hand that it is almost impossible to decipher what she wrote at this time.

But now to return to our quiet hour of rest after dinner. I soon observed that her habits of order were such that she could not go on with the conversation if a chair was out of its place ; everything was arranged with delicate regularity. We talked over the old times of her childhood ; of her elder sister's (Maria's) death—just like that of Helen Burns in "Jane Eyre"—of the desire (almost amounting to illness) of expressing herself in some way, writing or drawing ; of her weakened eyesight, which prevented her doing anything for two years, from the age of seventeen to nineteen ; of her being a governess ; of her going to Brussels ; whereupon I said I disliked Lucy Snowe, and we discussed M. Paul Emanuel ; and I told her of ——'s admiration of "Shirley," which pleased her, for the character of Shirley was meant for her sister Emily, about whom she is never tired of talking, nor I of listening. Emily must have been a remnant of the Titans, great-granddaughter of

the giants who used to inhabit the earth. One day Miss Brontë brought down a rough, common-looking oil painting, done by her brother, of herself—a little, rather prim-looking girl of eighteen—and two other sisters, girls of sixteen and fourteen, with cropped hair, and sad, dreamy-looking eyes. . . . Emily had a great dog—half mastiff, half bulldog—so savage, etc. . . . This dog went to her funeral, walking side by side with her father ; and then, to the day of its death, it slept at her room door, snuffing under it, and whining every morning.

We have generally had another walk before tea, which is at six ; at half-past eight prayers ; and by nine all the household are in bed, except ourselves. We sit up together till ten, or past ; and after I go I hear Miss Brontë come down and walk up and down the room for an hour or so.

E. C. Gaskell.

LUCIE, LADY DUFF-GORDON (1821–1869)

was the only child of John Austin and of Sarah Austin. She married in 1840 Sir Alexander Duff-Gordon ; and occupied herself by translating from the French and German. Her health failing, she visited the Cape of Good Hope in 1861–2 ; and she afterwards went to Egypt, where she died at Cairo. Her letters from the Cape and from Egypt were afterwards published, some of them during her lifetime.

AN EASTERN CEREMONY

Friday, January 22 [1864].

Yesterday I rode over to Karnac with Mustafa's Sais running by my side ; glorious hot sun and delicious

air. To hear the Sais chatter away, his tongue running as fast as his feet, made me deeply envious of his lungs. Mustafa joined me, and pressed me to go to visit the Sheykh's tomb for the benefit of my health, as he and Sheykh Yoosuf wished to say a Fat'hah for me; but I must not drink wine that day. I made a little difficulty on the score of difference of religion, but Sheykh Yoosuf, who came up, said he presumed I worshipped God and not stones, and that sincere prayers were good anywhere. Clearly the bigotry would have been on my side if I had refused any longer, so in the evening I went with Mustafa.

It was a very curious sight: the little dome illuminated with as much oil as the mosque could afford, over the tombs of Abu-l-Hajjaj and his three sons. A magnificent old man, like Father Abraham himself, dressed in white sat on a carpet at the foot of the tomb; he was the head of the family of Abu-l-Hajjaj. He made me sit by him and *was* extremely polite. Then came the Názir, the Hadee, a Turk travelling on government business, and a few other gentlemen, who all sat down after us, after kissing the hand of the old Sheykh. Every one talked; in fact, it was a *soirée* in honour of the dead sheykh. A party of men sat at the farther end of the place, with their faces to the kibleh, and played on a darabukheh (sort of small drum stretched over an earthenware funnel, which gives a peculiar sound), a tambourine without bells, and little tinkling cymbals (seggal) fitting on thumb and finger (crotales), and chanted songs in honour of Mohammad, and verses from the Psalms of David. Every now and then, one of our party left off talking, or prayed a little and counted his beads. The old sheykh sent for coffee and

gave me the first cup—a wonderful concession; at last the Názir proposed a Fat'hah for me, which the whole group around me repeated aloud, and then each said to me: "Our Lord God bless thee, and give thee health and peace, to thee and thy family, and take thee back safe to thy master and thy children": every one adding "Ameen" and giving the salám with the hand. I returned it, and said, "Our Lord reward thee and all people of kindness to strangers," which was considered a very proper answer.

After that we went away and the worthy Názir walked home with me to take a pipe and a glass of sherbert and eight children, who are all in Fum-el-Bahr, except two boys at school in Cairo. . . . I ought to add that in Cairo, or Lower Egypt, it would be quite impossible for a Christian to enter a sheykh's tomb at all—above all on his birthday festival, and on the night of Friday.

Lady Duff-Gordon to ——

ON ILLUSTRATING

March 7, 1864.

We have now settled into quite warm weather ways; no more going out at midday. It is now broiling, and I have been watching eight tall blacks swimming and capering about, with their skins shining like otters' fur when wet. They belong to a Gelláb, a slave-dealer's boat, I see. The beautiful thing is to see men and boys at work among the green corn. In the sun their brown skins look like dark clouded amber—semi-transparent, so fine are they.

I have a friend, a farmer in a neighbouring village, and am much amused at seeing country life. It cannot be rougher, as regards material comforts, in New Zealand or Central Africa, but there is no barbarism or lack of refinement in the manners of the people.

The fine sun and clear air are delicious and reviving, and I mount my donkey early and late, with little Ahmad trotting beside me. In the evening comes my dear Sheykh Yoosuf, and I blunder through an hour's dictation and reading of the story of the Barber's fifth brother. I presume that Yoosuf likes me, for I am constantly greeted with immense cordiality by graceful men in green turbans belonging, like him, to the holy family of Sheykh Abu-l-Hajjaj. They inquire tenderly after my health, and pray for me, and hope I am going to stay among them.

I received an *Illustrated News* with a print of a ridiculous Rebekah at the well, from a picture by Hilton. With regard to Eastern subjects, two courses are open: to paint like mediæval painters, white people in European clothes, or to come and see. Mawkish Misses, in fancy dresses, are not "benat-el-Arab," like Rebekah; nor would a respectable man go on his knees like an old fool before the girl he was asking in marriage for the son of his master.

Of all comical things, though, Victor Hugo's "Orientales" is the funnest. *Elephants* at Smyrna! Why not at Paris and London? *Quelle couleur locale?* Sheykh Yoosuf had a good laugh over Hilton's Rebekah, and the camels, more like pigs, as to their heads. He said we must have strange ideas of the books of Tourát (the Pentateuch) in Europe.

I rejoice to say that next Wednesday is Bairam, and

to-morrow Ramadan "dies." Omar is very thin and yellow and headachy, and every one cross. How I wish I were going, instead of my letter, to see you all; but it is evident that this heat is the thing that does me good, if anything will.

Lady Duff-Gordon to ——

ENGLISH LADIES

EL-UKSUR, *March 22*, 1864.

I am glad my letters amuse you. Sometimes I think they must breathe the unutterable dullness of Eastern life—not that it is dull to me, a curious spectator, but how the men with nothing on earth to do *can* endure it is a wonder. I went yesterday evening to call on a Turk at El-Karnak; he is a gentlemanlike man, the son of a former mudeer who was murdered—I believe, for his cruelty and extortion. He has a thousand feddáns (acres, or a little more) of land, and lives in a mud house, larger, but no better than that of a Fellah, and with two wives, and the brother of one of them; he leaves the farm to his Fellaheen altogether, I fancy. There was one book, a Turkish one; I could not read the title-page, and he did not tell me what it was. In short, there were no means of killing time, but the nargheeleh; no horse, no gun—nothing; and yet they don't seem bored. The two women are always clamorous for my visits, and very noisy and school-girlish, but apparently excellent friends, and very good natured. The gentleman gave me a kuffeeysh (thick headkerchief for the sun), so I took the ladies a bit of

silk I happened to have. You never heard anything like his raptures over M.'s portrait. "Máshá—allah! it is the will of God! and, by God, he is like a rose." But I can't take to the Turks; I always feel that they secretly dislike and think ill of us European women, though they profess huge admiration and pay *personal* compliments, which an Arab very seldom attempts.

I heard Seleem Efendi and Omar discussing English ladies one day lately, while I was inside the curtain with Seleem's slave-girl, and they did not know I heard them. Omar described J——, and was of opinion that a man who was married to her could want nothing more. "By my soul, she rides like a Bedawee, she shoots with the gun and pistol, rows the boat; she knows many languages and what is in their books; works with the needle like an Efireet, and to see her hands run over the teeth of the music-box (keys of the piano) amazed the mind, while her singing gladdens the soul. How, then, should her husband ever desire the coffee-shop! Walláhee! she can always amuse him at home. And as to *my* lady, the thing is not that she does not know. When I feel my stomach tightened, I go to the divan and say to her, 'Do you want anything—a pipe or sherbert or so and so? and I talk till she lays down her book and talks to me and I question her and amuse my mind; and, by God! if I were a rich man and could carry one English hareem like these, I would stand before her and serve her like her memlook. You see I am only this lady's servant, and I have not once sat in the coffee-shop, because of the sweetness of her tongue. Is it not true, therefore, that the man who can marry such hareem is rich more than with money?"

Seleem seemed disposed to think a little more of

good looks, though he quite agreed with all Omar's enthusiasm, and asked if J—— were beautiful. Omar answered, with decorous vagueness, that she was "a moon," but declined mentioning her hair, eyes, etc. (It is a liberty to describe a woman minutely.) I nearly laughed out at hearing Omar relate his manœuvres to make me "amuse his mind." It seems I am in no danger of being discharged for being dull. On the other hand, frenchified Turks have the greatest detestation of *femmes d'esprit.*

The weather has set in so hot that I have shifted my quarters out of my fine room to the south-west, into a room with only three sides, looking over a lovely green view to the north-east, and with a huge sort of solid verandah, as large as the room itself, on the open side—thus I live in the open air altogether. The bats and swallows are quite sociable ; I hope the serpents and scorpions will be more reserved. "Ell-Khamáseen" (the fifty days) has begun, and the wind is enough to mix up heaven and earth, but it is not distressing, like the Cape south-easter, and though hot, not choking like the khamáseen in Cairo and Alexandria. Mohammad brought me some of the new wheat just now. Think of harvest in March and April! These winds are as good for the crops here as a "nice steady rain" is in England. It is not necessary to water as much when the wind blows strong.

As I rode through the green fields along on the dyke a little boy sang, as he turned round on the musically creaking Sákiyeh (the water-wheel turned by an ox), the one eternal Sákiyeh tune. The words are *ad libitum*, and my little friend chanted: "Turn, O Sákiyeh, to the right, and turn to the left, who will take care of me if

my father dies? Turn, O Sákiyeh, etc. Pour water for the figs and the grapes, and for the water-melons. Turn," etc., etc. Nothing is so pathetic as that Sákiyeh song.

I passed the house of the Sháykh-el-Abab-deh, who called out to me to take coffee. The moon rose splendid, and the scene was lovely; the handsome black-brown sheykh in dark robes and white turban, Omar in a graceful white gown and red turban, the wild Abab-deh with their bare heads and long black ringlets, clad in all manner of dingy white rags, and bearing every kind of uncouth weapon in every kind of wild and graceful attitude, and a few little brown children quite naked, and shaped like Cupids. And there we sat and looked so romantic, and talked quite like ladies and gentlemen about the merits of Sákneh and Almás, the two great rival women singers of Cairo. I think the Sheykh wished to display his experience of fashionable life.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816–1855)

WAS born at Thornton, Yorkshire, a daughter of Patrick Brontë, a clergyman of Irish descent. In 1821 Mr. Brontë became curate at Haworth, to which village he moved, and where Charlotte's life was passed, except for her school days and for the period of two years when she studied at Brussels. Every one is familiar with the story of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë, as told by Mrs. Gaskell in her biography of the three sisters. It is sufficient, therefore, to state that Charlotte's first story, "The Professor" (which was rejected), was followed in 1847 by "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," 1849, and "Villette," 1852. She married Mr. Nicholls, her father's curate, in 1854, and died at Haworth on March 31, 1855.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

From an engraving by J. C. Armytage, after the drawing by G. Richmond, R.A.

p. 370]

To Robert Southey

THE POET'S WARNING

March 16, 1837.

SIR,—I cannot rest till I have answered your letter, even though by addressing you a second time I should appear a little intrusive; but I must thank you for the kind and wise advice you have condescended to give me. I had not ventured to hope for such a reply; so considerate in its tone, so noble in its spirit. I must suppress what I feel, or you will think me foolishly enthusiastic.

At the first perusal of your letter I felt only shame and regret that I had ever ventured to trouble you with my crude rhapsody; I felt a painful heat rise to my face when I thought of the quires of paper I had covered with what once gave me so much delight, but which now was only a source of confusion; but after I had thought a little, and read it again and again, the prospect seemed to clear. You do not forbid me to write; you do not say that what I write is utterly destitute of merit. You only warn me against the folly of neglecting real duties for the sake of imaginative pleasures; of writing for the love of fame; for the selfish excitement of emulation. You kindly allow me to write poetry for its own sake, provided I leave undone nothing which I ought to do, in order to pursue that single, absorbing, exquisite gratification. I am afraid, sir, you think me very foolish. I know the first letter I wrote to you was all senseless trash from beginning to end; but I am not altogether the idle, dreaming being it would seem to denote. My father is a clergyman of limited though competent income, and I am the eldest of his children.

He expended quite as much on my education as h could afford in justice to the rest. I thought it therefor my duty, when I left school, to become a governess In that capacity I find enough to occupy my thought all day long, and my head and hands too, without havi a moment's time for one dream of the imaginatio In the evenings, I confess, I do think, but I never troub any one else with my thoughts. I carefully avoid a appearance of preoccupation and eccentricity, whic might lead those I live amongst to suspect the natu of my pursuits. Following my father's advice—w from my childhood has counselled me, just in the wi and friendly tone of your letter—I have endeavoure not only attentively to observe all the duties a woma ought to fulfil, but to feel deeply interested in the I don't always succeed, for sometimes when I'm teachin or sewing I would rather be reading or writing; but try to deny myself; and my father's approbatio amply rewarded me for the privation. Once mo allow me to thank you with sincere gratitude. I trus I shall never more feel ambitious to see my name i print; if the wish should rise, I'll look at Southey letter and suppress it. It is honour enough for me tha I have written to him, and received an answer. Tha letter is consecrated; no one shall ever see it but pap and my brother and sisters. Again I thank you. Thi incident, I suppose, will be renewed no more; if I liv to be an old woman, I shall remember it thirty yea hence as a bright dream. The signature which yo suspected of being fictitious is my real name. Again therefore I must sign myself,

C. BRONTË.

P.S.—Pray, sir, excuse me for writing to you a secon

time ; I could not help writing, partly to tell you how thankful I am for your kindness, and partly to let you know that your advice shall not be wasted, however sorrowfully and reluctantly it may at first be followed.

C. B.

Charlotte Brontë to a Friend

(ON HER FIRST OFFER OF MARRIAGE)

March 12, 1839.

. . . I had a kindly leaning towards him, because he is an amiable and well-disposed man. Yet I had not, and could not have, that intense attachment which would make me willing to die for him ; and if ever I marry it must be in that light adoration that I will regard my husband. Ten to one I shall never have the chance again ; but *n'importe*. Moreover, I was aware that he knew so little of me he could hardly be conscious to whom he was writing. Why ! it would startle him to see me in my natural home character ; he would think I was a wild, romantic enthusiast indeed. I could not sit all day long making a grave face before my husband. I would laugh, and satirise, and say whatever came into my head first. And if he were a clever man, and loved me, the whole world, weighed in the balance against his smallest wish, should be light as air.

Charlotte Brontë to George Smith

"ESMOND"

November 10, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—I only wished the publication of "Shirley" to be delayed till "Villette" was nearly ready;

so that there can now be no objection to its being issued whenever you think fit. After putting the MS. into type I can only say that, should I be able to proceed with the third volume at my average amount of interruptions, I should hope to have it ready in about three weeks. I leave it to you to decide whether it would be better to delay the printing that space of time, or to commence it immediately. It would certainly be more satisfactory if you were to see the third volume before printing the first and second; yet, if delay is likely to prove injurious, I do not think it is indispensable.

I have read the third volume of "Esmond." I found it both entertaining and exciting to me; it seems to possess an impetus and excitement beyond the other two; that movement and brilliancy its predecessors sometimes wanted never fail here. In certain passages I thought Thackeray used all his powers; their grand, serious force yielded a profound satisfaction. "At last he puts forth his strength," I could not help saying to myself. No character in the book strikes me as more masterly than that of Beatrix; its conception is fresh, and its delineations vivid. It is peculiar; it has impressions of a new kind—new at least to me. Beatrix is not, in herself, all bad. So much does she sometimes reveal of what is good and great as to suggest this feeling; you would think she was urged by a Fate. You would think that some antique doom presses on her house, and that once in so many generations its brightest ornament was to become its greatest disgrace. At times what is good in her struggles against this terrible destiny, but the Fate conquers. Beatrix cannot be an honest woman and a good man's wife. She "tries and she *cannot*." Proud, beautiful, and sullied, she was

born what she becomes, a king's mistress. I know not whether you have seen the notice in *The Leader*; I read it just after concluding the book. Can I be wrong in deeming it a notice tame, cold, and insufficient? With all its professed friendliness, it produced on me a most disheartening impression. Surely another sort of justice than this will be rendered to "Esmond" from other quarters. One acute remark of the critic is to the effect that Blanche Amory and Beatrix are identical —sketched from the same original! To me they are about as identical as a weazel and a royal tigress of Bengal; both the latter are quadrupeds, both the former women. But I must not take up either your time or my own with further remarks.

Believe me yours sincerely,

C. BRONTË.

Charlotte Brontë to Mary Taylor[1]

A VISIT TO HER PUBLISHER

HAWORTH, *September* 4, 1848.

DEAR POLLY,—I write you a great many more letters than you write me, though whether they all reach you, or not, Heaven knows! I dare say you will not be without a certain desire to know how our affairs get on; I will give you therefore a notion as briefly as may be. Acton Bell has published another book; it is in three volumes, but I do not like it quite so well as "Agnes Grey" —the subject not being such as the author had pleasure in handling; it has been praised by some reviews and blamed by others. As yet, only £25 have been realised

[1] This letter is printed by the kind permission of Mr. Clement Shorter, from his most interesting and valuable work entitled "The Brontës: Life and Work."

for the copyright, and as Acton Bell's publisher is a shuffling scamp, I expected no more.

About two months since I had a letter from my publishers—Smith and Elder—saying that "Jane Eyre" had had a great run in America, and that a publisher there had consequently bid high for the first sheets of a new work by Currer Bell, which they had promised to let him have.

Presently after came another missive from Smith and Elder; their American correspondent had written to them complaining that the first sheets of a new work by Currer Bell had been already received, and not by their house, but by a rival publisher, and asking the meaning of such false play; it enclosed an extract from a letter from Mr. Newby (A. and C. Bell's publisher) affirming that to the best of his belief "Jane Eyre," "Wuthering Heights," and "Agnes Grey," and "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall" (the new work) were all the production of one author.

This was a *lie*, as Newby had been told repeatedly that they were the production of three different authors; but the fact was he wanted to make a dishonest move in the game to make the public and the trade believe that he had got hold of Currer Bell, and thus cheat Smith and Elder by securing the American publisher's bid.

The upshot of it was that on the very day I received Smith and Elder's letter, Anne and I packed up a small box, sent it down to Keighley, set out ourselves after tea, walked through a snowstorm to the station, got to Leeds, and whirled up by the night train to London with the view of proving our separate identity to Smith and Elder, and confronting Newby with his *lie*.

We arrived at the Chapter Coffee-House (our old place, Polly: we did not well know where else to go)

about eight o'clock in the morning. We washed ourselves, had some breakfast, sat a few minutes, and then set off in queer inward excitement to 65, Cornhill. Neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Williams knew we were coming—they had never seen us—they did not know whether we were men or women, but had always written to us as men.

We found 65 to be a large bookseller's shop, in a street almost as bustling as the Strand. We went in, walked up to the counter. There were a great many young men and lads here and there; I said to the first I could accost: "May I see Mr. Smith?" He hesitated, looked a little surprised. We sat down and waited a while, looking at some books on the counter, publications of theirs well known to us, of many of which they had sent us copies as presents. At last we were shown up to Mr. Smith. "Is it Mr. Smith?" I said, looking up through my spectacles at a tall young man. "It is." I then put his own letter into his hand directed to Currer Bell. He looked at it and then at me again. "Where did you get this?" he said. I laughed at his perplexity—a recognition took place. I gave my real name: Miss Brontë. We were in a small room—ceiled with a great skylight—and there explanations were rapidly gone into; Mr. Newby being anathematised, I fear, with undue vehemence. Mr. Smith hurried out and returned quickly with one whom he introduced as Mr. Williams, a pale, mild, stooping man of fifty, very much like a faded Tom Dixon. Another recognition and a long, nervous shaking of hands. Then followed talk—talk—talk; Mr. Williams being silent, Mr. Smith loquacious.

Mr. Smith said we must come and stay at his house, but we were not prepared for a long stay, and declined

this also ; as we took our leave he told us he should bring his sisters to call on us that evening. We returned to our inn, and I paid for the excitement of the interview by a thundering headache and harassing sickness. Towards evening, as I got no better and expected the Smiths to call, I took a strong dose of sal-volatile. It roused me a little ; still, I was in grievous bodily case when they were announced. They came in, two elegant young ladies, in full dress, prepared for the Opera—Mr. Smith himself in evening costume, white gloves, etc. We had by no means understood that it was settled we were to go to the Opera, and were not ready. Moreover, we had no fine, elegant dresses with us, or in the world. However, on brief rumination I thought it would be wise to make no objections—I put my headache in my pocket, we attired ourselves in the plain, high-made country garments we possessed, and went with them to their carriage, where we found Mr. Williams. They must have thought us queer, quizzical-looking beings, especially me with my spectacles. I smiled inwardly at the contrast, which must have been apparent, between me and Mr. Smith as I walked with him up the crimson-carpeted staircase of the Opera House and stood amongst a brilliant throng at the box door, which was not yet open. Fine ladies and gentlemen glanced at us with a slight, graceful superciliousness quite warranted by the circumstances. Still, I felt pleasantly excited in spite of headache and sickness and conscious clownishness, and I saw Anne was calm and gentle, which she always is.

The performance was Rossini's opera of the *Barber of Seville*, very brilliant, though I fancy there are things I should like better. We got home after one o'clock ; we had never been in bed the night before, and had been

in constant excitement for twenty-four hours. You may imagine we were tired.

The next day, Sunday, Mr. Williams came early and took us to church. He was so quiet, but so sincere in his attentions, one could not but have a most friendly leaning towards him. He has a nervous hesitation in speech, and a difficulty in finding appropriate language in which to express himself, which throws him into the background in conversation; but I had been his correspondent, and therefore knew with what intelligence he could write, so that I was not in danger of undervaluing him. In the afternoon Mr. Smith came in his carriage with his mother, to take us to his house to dine. Mr. Smith's residence is at Bayswater, six miles from Cornhill; the rooms, the drawing-room especially, looked splendid to us. There was no company—only his mother, his two grown-up sisters, and his brother, a lad of twelve or thirteen, and a little sister, the youngest of the family, very like himself. They are all dark-eyed, dark-haired, and have clear, pale faces. The mother is a portly, handsome woman of her age, and all the children more or less well-looking—one of the daughters decidedly pretty. We had a fine dinner, which neither Anne nor I had appetite to eat, and were glad when it was over. I always feel under an awkward constraint at table. Dining-out would be hideous to me.

Mr. Smith made himself very pleasant. He is a *practical* man. I wish Mr. Williams were more so, but he is altogether of the contemplative, theorising order. Mr. Williams has too many abstractions.

On Monday we went to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy and the National Gallery, dined again at Mr. Smith's, then went home with Mr. Williams to tea, and

saw his comparatively humble but neat residence and his fine family of eight children. A daughter of Leigh Hunt's was there. She sang some little Italian airs which she had picked up among the peasantry in Tuscany, in a manner that charmed me.

On Tuesday morning we left London laden with books which Mr. Smith had given us, and got safely home. A more jaded wretch than I looked when I returned it would be difficult to conceive. I was thin when I went, but was meagre indeed when I returned; my face looked grey and very old, with strange, deep lines ploughed in it; my eyes stared unnaturally. I was weak and yet restless. In a while, however, the bad effects of excitement went off and I regained my normal condition. We saw Mr. Newby, but of him more another time. Good-bye. God bless you. Write.

C. B.

SARAH AUSTIN (1793–1867)

A DAUGHTER of the famous clan of the Taylors of Norwich, and the wife of John Austin, a barrister. She made translations from the German and the French, and wrote a book on Goethe, Germany, and national education. Her only daughter, Lady Duff-Gordon, was also an accomplished translator.

To Mrs. Reeve[1]

SHIPS AT MALTA

LAZARETTO, MALTA, *October* 1836.

DEAR SISTER,—Nothing can be more improving, animating, beautiful, and unlike the rest of existence, than

[1] This and the following letters by Sarah Austin are reprinted, by kind permission of Mrs. Janet Ross, from her book, "Three Generations of Englishwomen."

the first sight of the interior of an English man-of-war ; the first day or two passed in the midst of all her pomp and glory, her orderly tumult, her difficulties, and her power ; but the weariness that comes on after some days is indescribable. Accordingly, after a ten days' passage from Marseilles on board the magnificent frigate *Vernon*, nothing could exceed our impatience at the calm which kept us hanging off the coast of Malta, nor the joy with which we saw the steam frigate *Medea* coming out of the harbour to tow us in. I shall never forget the effect which her rapid, undeviating course had upon me, after ten days of tacking, watching, longing for winds that would not blow. It was like the course of a man who asks no help but of his own judgment and his own inflexible will, compared with that of a weak and dependent woman shaping her way by every changing mood. In an hour from the time she took our towing rope we were in the great harbour of Valetta. No description, and I think no painting, can do justice to the wonderful aspect. In the first place, the many harbours, the way in which the rocky points throw themselves out into the sea ; then the colouring, the points a rich yellow white, the bays deep blue, and both lying under a sky which renders every object sharp, and every shadow deep and defined. The fortifications which grow out of all these headlands are so engrafted on the rocks, that you cannot see where the one begins and the other ends. The high, massive walls overlap and intersect at so many points, that there can be no monotony. In the bright sunlight the shadows of all these angles cut the earth or the sea just as variously as the solid walls do the sky. Above all rose the city, with its many churches. The most

striking objects seen from the port are the splendid Albergo id Castiglia, the lighthouse on Fort St. Elmo, and the Barracca, a row of arches standing on a lofty point and surrounded with trees—the only ones visible. Imagine these walls and bastions, this Barracca, and every balcony overlooking the harbour, crowded with people, whose cheers as we entered the harbour, rang across the waves and re-echoed from side to side, with an effect that to me, who expected nothing, was quite overpowering. Till this moment I had hardly been conscious of the awful task committed to my husband ;[1] I felt those cheers, eager and vehement as they were, as the voice of the suffering calling for help and for justice. While the officers around me were gaily congratulating me on a reception so flattering, I could say nothing, and turned away to hide my tears.

Innumerable Maltese boats were flitting about the harbour, all painted bright green and red. Their build is peculiar ; the prow rises like a swan's neck. Most of them have a little flag, those belonging to the Lazaretto being distinguished by a yellow one. They are rowed by two men standing, who at every stroke bend forward and throw their weight upon the oar. Most of them wear the long red woollen shawl, which they get from Tripoli, girded round the loins ; their dress is a blue jacket and blue or white trowsers, and the flat straw hat of our sailors. Nothing can be gayer than the appearance of these boats, while darting through them might be seen all the varieties of man-of-war's boats, with all the characteristics of their nation about them—steadiness, precision, order, promptitude, neatness, and quietness.

[1] His appointment at Malta as Royal Commissioner.

As the sun sank in the cloudless sky, the guns from all the ships were fired, and the bells and hum of the city were distinctly audible. The *Vernon's* barge took us into the Quarantine harbour, which lies on the other side of the tongue of land on which stands Valetta. At the Lazaretto we found Mr. Greig, the superintendent of Quarantine, waiting to introduce us to our rooms, for we are supposed to be infected, as the *Vernon* came from the Levant to fetch us at Marseilles. The stillness of this very comfortable prison contrasted strongly with the scene we had left, and was a great relief to wearied travellers.

Sarah Austin to Mrs. Simpson

HOT-WEATHER ATTIRE

WEYBRIDGE, *June* 1862.

DEAREST MINNIE,—I was just going to write to Mrs. Senior to say that, albeit packed, or nearly so, and ready to start, the heat of this day terrifies me, and I feel as if I ought rather to make my will than attempt a visit. I really dare not answer for myself; I have had such giddiness from heat that I might fall down or do some strange thing. It is most provoking. One difficulty is the necessity of being dressed with decency. The costume I wish to adopt is that in which I found the Princess Villafranca—a shift (of the simplest and most primitive cut), a large black lace shawl, a pair of silk slippers (feet bare), and a huge fan. (N.B.—She was fatter than I am.) This I call a reasonable dress for this weather; but I fear your mother's drawing-room is not the place for it. Even the most correct

English ladies in Malta contented themselves with a shift and a white peignoir. At home I make a very near approximation to this; but, as Lady W. Russell said, the English conclude if your dress is loose that your morals are so. In that case I am thoroughly dissolute, but I will reform at Kensington.

The more hyperborean the room the better. If you have an icehouse, put me in that. Seriously, I could by no means *sleep*, even if I were to *lie* in a south room, and I don't the least mind the additional stairs; that difficulty can be surmounted by prudence and patience. This arrangement has the additional advantage that your kind father is not dislodged, which I know he was on my account before. Anything that makes me feel less of a bore and a burden is a great comfort. To conclude, I wish, hope, intend to be with you to-morrow evening. If I do not arrive by half-past ten, pray conclude that I cannot, and in that case I shall continue to have the same hopes and intentions for the following day. If that degree of uncertainty puts you to any inconvenience, pray, dear child, say so. Don't let me be a torment, if you love me, as I hope you do; for I am always, with a great deal of affection,

Yours,

S. AUSTIN.

SARAH MARGARET FULLER (Marchioness Ossoli) (1810–1850)

WAS born at Cambridge-port, Mass. After her father's death she was obliged to maintain her brothers and sisters; this she did by teaching. Later she began to write, edited

The Dial, and contributed a series of articles to *The Tribune*, In 1846 she visited Rome, and there met and married the Marquis Ossoli; during the siege she took charge of a hospital. On returning to America in 1850 she, her husband, and their little boy were drowned, the vessel being wrecked near New York. The child's body was washed ashore; those of his parents were never recovered. The last letter of Madame Ossoli, that of May 14, 1850, printed on page 401, did not reach its destination till after her death.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to ——

FANNY KEMBLE

[1837 ?]

When in Boston, I saw the Kembles twice—in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *The Stranger*. The first night I felt much disappointed in Miss K. In the gay parts a coquettish, courtly manner marred the wild mirth and wanton wit of Beatrice. Yet, in everything else I liked her conception of the part; and where she urges Benedict to fight with Claudio, and where she reads Benedict's sonnet, she was admirable. But I received no more pleasure from Miss K.'s acting out the part than I have done in reading it, and this disappointed me. Neither did I laugh, but thought all the while of Miss K.—how very graceful she was, and whether this and that way of rendering the part was just. I do not believe she has comic power within herself, though tasteful enough to comprehend any part. So I went home, vexed because my "heart was not full," and my "brain not on fire" with enthusiasm. I drank my milk, and went to

sleep, as on other dreary occasions, and dreamed not of Miss Kemble.

Next night, however, I went expectant, and all my soul was satisfied. I saw her at a favourable distance. and she looked beautiful. And as the scene rose in interest, her attitudes, her gestures, had the expression which an Angelo could give to sculpture. After she tells her story,—and I was almost suffocated by the effort she made to divulge her sin and fall—she sunk to the earth, her head bowed upon her knee, her white drapery falling in large, graceful folds about this broken piece of beautiful humanity, *crushed* in the very manner so well described by Scott when speaking of a far different person, "not as one intentionally stoops, kneels, or prostrates himself to excite compassion, but like a man borne down on all sides by the pressure of some invisible force, which crushes him to the earth without power of resistance." A movement of abhorrence from me, as her insipid confidante turned away, attested the triumph of the poet-actress. Had not all been over in a moment, I believe I could not have refrained from rushing forward to raise the fair, frail being, who seemed so prematurely humbled in her parent dust. I burst into tears: and, with the stifled, hopeless feeling of a real sorrow, continued to weep till the very end; nor could I recover till I left the house.

That is genius, which could give such life to this play; for, if I may judge from other parts, it is deforced by inflated sentiments, and verified by few natural touches. I wish I had it to read, for I should like to recall her every tone and look.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to Beethoven

TO THE SPIRIT OF THE MASTER[1]

Saturday Evening, November 25, 1843.

My only Friend,—How shall I thank thee for once more breaking the chains of my sorrowful slumber? My heart beats. I live again, for I feel that I am worthy audience for thee, and that my being would be reason enough for thine.

Master, my eyes are always clear. I see that the universe is rich, if I am poor. I see the insignificance of my sorrows. In my will, I am not a captive; in my intellect, not a slave. Is it then my fault that the palsy of my affections benumbs my whole life?

I know that the curse is but for the time. I know what the eternal justice promises. But on this one sphere it is sad. Thou didst say, thou hadst no friend but thy art. But that one is enough. I have no art, in which to vent the swell of a soul as deep as thine, Beethoven, and of a kindred frame. Thou wilt not think me presumptuous in this saying, as another might. I have always known that thou wouldst welcome and know me, as would no other who ever lived upon the earth since its first creation.

Thou wouldst forgive me, master, that I have not been true to my eventual destiny, and therefore have suffered on every side "the pangs of despised love." Thou didst the same; but thou didst borrow from those errors the inspiration of thy genius. Why is it not thus with me? Is it because, as a woman, I am bound by a physical law, which prevents the soul

[1] Here Beethoven is only Madame Ossoli's imaginary correspondent, as he died in 1827.

from manifesting itself? Sometimes the moon seems mockingly to say so—to say that I, too, shall not shine, unless I can find a sun. O, cold and barren moon, tell a different tale!

But thou, oh blessed master! dost answer all my questions, and make it my privilege to be. Like a humble wife to the sage or poet, it is my triumph that I can understand and cherish thee: like a mistress, I arm thee for the fight: like a young daughter, I tenderly bind thy wounds. Thou art to me beyond compare, for thou art all I want. No heavenly sweetness of saint or martyr, no many-leaved Raphael, no golden Plato, is anything to me, compared with thee. The infinite Shakspeare, the stern Angelo, Dante,—bitter-sweet like thee,—are no longer seen in thy presence. And, beside these names, there are none that could vibrate to thy crystal sphere. Thou hast all of them, and that ample surge of life besides, that great winged being which they only dreamed of. There is none greater than Shakspeare; he, too, is a god; but his creations are successive: thy *fiat* comprehends them all.

Last summer I met thy mood in nature, on those wide, impassioned plains flower- and crag-bestrewn. There the tide of emotion had rolled over, and left the vision of its smiles and sobs, as I saw to-night from thee.

If thou wouldst take me wholly to thyself——! I am lost in this world, where I sometimes meet angels, but of a different star from mine. Even so does thy spirit plead with all spirits. But thou dost triumph and bring them all in.

Master, I have this summer envied the oriole which had even a swinging nest in the high bough. I have

envied the least flower that came to seed, though that seed were strown to the wind. But I envy none when I am with thee.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to Ralph Waldo E[merson]

A PEN-PICTURE OF CARLYLE

[Paris, *November* 16, 1846.]

Of the people I saw in London, you will wish me to speak first of the Carlyles. Mr. C. came to see me at once, and appointed an evening to be passed at their house. That first time I was delighted with him. He was in a very sweet humour—full of wit and pathos, without being overbearing or oppressive. I was quite carried away with the rich flow of his discourse; and the hearty, noble earnestness of his personal being brought back the charm which once was upon his writing, before I wearied of it. I admired his Scotch, his way of singing his great full sentences, so that each one was like the stanza of a narrative ballad. He let me talk, now and then, enough to free my lungs and change my position, so that I did not get tired. That evening he talked of the present state of things in England, giving light, witty sketches of the men of the day, fanatics and others, and some sweet, homely stories he told of things he had known of the Scotch peasantry. Of you he spoke with hearty kindness: and he told, with beautiful feeling, a story of some poor farmer, an artisan, in the country, who on Sunday lays aside the cark and care of that dirty English world, and sits reading the Essays, and looking upon the sea.

I left him that night intending to go out very often to their house. I assure you there never was anything so witty as Carlyle's description of —— ——. It was enough to kill one with laughing. I, on my side, contributed a story to his fund of anecdote on this subject, and it was fully appreciated. Carlyle is worth a thousand of you for that ;—he is not ashamed to laugh when he is amused, but goes on in a cordial, human fashion.

The second time Mr. C. had a dinner-party, at which was a witty, French, flippant sort of man,[1] author of a History of Philosophy, and now writing a Life of Goethe, a task for which he must be as unfit as irreligion and sparkling shallowness can make him. But he told stories admirably, and was allowed sometimes to interrupt Carlyle a little, of which one was glad, for that night he was in his more acrid mood ; and, though much more brilliant than on the former evening, grew wearisome to me, who disclaimed and rejected almost everything he said.

For a couple of hours he was talking about poetry; and the whole harangue was one eloquent proclamation of the defects in his own mind. Tennyson wrote in verse because the schoolmasters had taught him that it was great to do so, and had thus, unfortunately, been turned from the true path for a man. Burns had, in like manner, been turned from his vocation. Shakespeare had not the good sense to see that it would have been better to write straight on in prose ;—and such nonsense, which, though amusing enough at first, he ran to death after a while. The most amusing part is always when he comes back to some refrain, as

[1] Apparently George Henry Lewes.

in the "French Revolution" of the *sea-green*. In this instance, it was Petrarch and *Laura*, the last word pronounced with his ineffable sarcasm of drawl. Although he said this over fifty times, I could not ever help laughing when Laura would come, Carlyle running his chin out, when he spoke it, and his eyes glancing till they looked like the eyes and beak of a bird of prey. Poor Laura! Lucky for her that her poet had already got her safely canonized beyond the reach of this Teufelsdrockh vulture.

The worst of hearing Carlyle is that you cannot interrupt him. I understand the habit and power of haranguing have increased very much upon him, so that you are a perfect prisoner when he has once got hold of you. To interrupt him is a physical impossibility. If you get a chance to remonstrate for a moment, he raises his voice and bears you down. True, he does you no injustice, and, with his admirable penetration, sees the disclaimer in your mind, so that you are not morally delinquent; but it is not pleasant to be unable to utter it. The latter part of the evening, however, he paid us for this, by a series of sketches, in his finest style of railing and raillery, of modern French literature, not one of them, perhaps, perfectly just, but all drawn with the finest, boldest strokes, and, from his point of view, masterly. All were depreciating, except that of Béranger. Of him he spoke with perfect justice, because with hearty sympathy.

I had afterward some talk with Mrs. C., whom hitherto I had only *seen*; for who can speak while her husband is there? I like her very much;—she is full of grace, sweetness, and talent. Her eyes are sad and charming. . . .

After this, they went to stay at Lord Ashburton's, and I only saw them once more, when they came to pass an evening with us. Unluckily, Mazzini was with us, whose society, when he was there alone, I enjoyed more than any. He is a beauteous and pure music: also, he is à dear friend of Mrs. C., but his being there gave the conversation a turn to "progress" and ideal subjects, and C. was fluent in invectives on all our "rosewater imbecilities." We all felt distant from him, and Mazzini, after some vain efforts to remonstrate, became very sad. Mrs. C. said to me, "These are but opinions to Carlyle; but to Mazzini, who has given his all, and helped bring his friends to the scaffold, in pursuit of such subjects, it is a matter of life and death."

All Carlyle's talk that evening was a defence of mere force—success the test of right;—if people would not behave well, put collars round their necks;—find a hero, and let them be his slaves, etc. It was very Titanic, and anti-celestial. I wish the last evening had been more melodious. However, I bid Carlyle farewell, with feelings of the warmest friendship and admiration. We cannot feel otherwise to a great and noble nature, whether it harmonises with our own or not. I never appreciated what he has done for his age till I saw England. I could not. You must stand in the shadow of that mountain of shams, to know how hard it is to cast light across it.

Honour to Carlyle! *Hoch!* Although, in the wine with which we drink this health, I, for one, must mingle the despised "rose-water."

And now, having to your eye shown the defects of my own mind, in the sketch of another, I will pass on more lowly,—more willing to be imperfect, since

Fate permits such notable creatures, after all, to be only this or that. It is much if one is not only a crow or magpie ;—Carlyle is only a lion. Some time we may, all in full, be intelligent and humanly fair.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to Ralph Waldo Emerson

CARLYLE'S CONVERSATION

PARIS, *December* 1846.

Accustomed to the infinite wit and exuberant richness of his writings, his talk is still an amazement and a splendour scarcely to be faced with steady eyes. He does not converse, only harangues. It is the usual misfortune of such marked men,—happily not one invariable or inevitable,—that they cannot allow other minds room to breathe, and show themselves in their atmosphere, and thus miss the refreshment and instruction which the greatest never cease to need from the experience of the humblest. Carlyle allows no one a chance, but bears down all opposition, not only by his wit and onset of words, resistless in their sharpness as so many bayonets, but by actual physical superiority —raising his voice, and rushing on his opponent with a torrent of sound. This is not in the least from unwillingness to allow freedom to others. On the contrary, no man would more enjoy a manly resistance to his thought. But it is the impulse of a mind accustomed to follow out its own impulse, as the hawk its prey, and which knows not how to stop in the chase. Carlyle indeed is arrogant and overbearing ; but in his arrogance there is no littleness—no self-love. It is the heroic arrogance of some old Scandinavian con-

queror ;—it is his nature, and the untamable impulse that has given him power to crush the dragons. You do not love him, perhaps, nor revere ; and perhaps, also he would only laugh at you if you did ; but you like him heartily, and like to see him the powerful smith, the Siegfrid, melting all the old iron in his furnace till it glows to a sunset red, and burns you, if you senselessly go too near. He seems, to me, quite isolated,—lonely as the desert,—yet never was a man more fitted to prize a man, could he find one to match his mood. He finds them, but only in the past.

He sings, rather than talks. He pours upon you a kind of satirical, heroical, critical poem, with regular cadences, and generally catching up, near the beginning, some singular epithet, which serves as a *refrain* when his song is full, or with which, as with a knitting needle, he catches up the stitches, if he has chanced, now and then, to let fall a row. For the higher kinds of poetry he has no sense, and his talk on that subject is delightfully and gorgeously absurd. He sometimes stops a minute to laugh at it himself, then begins anew with fresh vigour ; for all the spirits he is driving before him seem to him as Fata Morganas, ugly masks, in fact, if he can but make them turn about ; but he laughs that they seem to others such dainty Ariels. His talk, like his books, is full of pictures ; his critical strokes masterly. Allow for his point of view, and his survey is admirable. He is a large subject. I cannot speak more or wiselier of him now, nor needs it ;—his works are true, to blame and praise him,—the Siegfrid of England,—great and powerful, if not quite invulnerable, and of a might rather to destroy evil than legislate for good. . . .

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to E. H.

GEORGE SAND

PARIS, *January* 18, 1847.

You wished to hear of George Sand, or, as they say in Paris, "Madame Sand." I find that all we had heard of her was true in the outline; I had supposed it might be exaggerated. She had every reason to leave her husband,—a stupid, brutal man, who insulted and neglected her. He afterwards gave up their child to her for a sum of money. . . . She takes rank in society like a man, for the weight of her thoughts, and has just given her daughter in marriage. Her son is a grown-up young man, an artist. Many women visit her and esteem it an honour.

The servant who admitted me was in the picturesque costume of a peasant, and, as Madame Sand afterward told me, her god-daughter, whom she had brought from her province. She announced me as "*Madame Saleze*," and returned into the ante-room to tell me, "*Madame says she does not know you.*" I began to think I was doomed to the rebuff, among the crowd who deserve it. However, to make assurance sure, I said, "Ask if she has not received a letter from me." As I spoke, Madame S. opened the door, and stood looking at me an instant. Our eyes met. I never shall forget her look at that moment. The doorway made a frame for her figure; she is large, but well-formed. She was dressed in a robe of dark violet silk, with a black mantle on her shoulders, her beautiful hair dressed with the greatest taste, her whole appearance and attitude, in its simple and ladylike dignity, presented an almost ludicrous contrast to the vulgar

caricature idea of George Sand. Her face is a very little like the portraits, but much finer; the upper part of the forehead and eyes are beautiful, the lower, strong and masculine, expressive of a hardy temperament and strong passions, but not in the least coarse; the complexion olive, and the air of the whole head Spanish (as, indeed, she was born at Madrid, and is only on one side of French blood). All these details I saw at a glance; but what fixed my attention was the expression of *goodness*, nobleness, and power, that pervaded the whole,—the truly human heart and nature that shone in the eyes. As our eyes met, she said, "*C'est vous*," and held out her hand. I took it, and went into her little study; we sat down a moment, then I said, "*Il me fait de bien de vous voir*," and I am sure I said it with my whole heart, for it made me very happy to see such a woman, so large and so developed a character, and everything that *is* good in it so *really* good. I loved, shall always love her.

She looked away and said, "*Ah! vous m'avez écrit une lettre charmante.* This was all the preliminary of our talk, which then went on as if we had always known one another. She told me, before I went away, that she was going that very day to write to me; that when the servant announced me she did not recognise the name, but after a minute it struck her that it might be *La Dame Américaine*, as the foreigners very commonly call me, for they find my name hard to remember. She was very much pressed for time, as she was then preparing copy for the printer, and having just returned, there were many applications to see her, but she wanted me to stay then, saying, "It is better to throw things aside, and seize the present moment." I stayed a

good part of the day, and was very glad afterwards, for I did not see her again uninterrupted. Another day I was there, and saw her in her circle. Her daughter and another lady were present, and a number of gentlemen. Her position there was of an intellectual woman and good friend,—the same as my own in the circle of my acquaintance as distinguished from my intimates. . . .

Her way of talking is just like her writing,—lively, picturesque, with an undertone of deep feeling, and the same happiness in striking the nail on the head every now and then with a blow.

We did not talk at all of personal or private matters. I saw, as one sees in her writings, the want of an independent, interior life, but I did not feel it as a fault, there is so much in her of her kind. I heartily enjoyed the sense of so rich, so prolific, so ardent a genius. I liked the woman in her, too, very much; I never liked a woman better. . . I forgot to mention that, while talking, she *does* smoke all the time her little cigarette. This is now a common practice among ladies abroad, but I believe originated with her.

For the rest, she holds her place in the literary and social world of France like a man, and seems full of energy and courage in it. I suppose she has suffered much, but she has also enjoyed and done much, and her expression is one of calmness and happiness. . . .

Afterwards I saw Chopin. . . . I went to see him in his room with one of his friends. He is always ill, and as frail as a snowdrop, but an exquisite genius. He played to me, and I liked his talking scarcely less. Madame S. loved Liszt before him; she has thus been intimate with the two opposite sides of the musical

world. Mickiewiez says, "Chopin talks with spirit, and gives us the Ariel view of the universe. Liszt is the eloquent *tribune* to the world of men, a little vulgar and showy certainly, but I like the tribune best." It is said here that Madame S. has long had a friendship only for Chopin, who, perhaps, on his side, prefers to be a lover, and a jealous lover; but she does not leave him, because he needs her care so much, when sick and suffering. . . .

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to E. H.

RACHAEL

[Paris 1847.]

. . . When I came here, my first thought was to go and see Mademoiselle Rachael. I was sure that in her I should find a true genius. I went to see her seven or eight times, always in parts that required great force of soul and purity of taste, even to conceive them, and only once had reason to find fault with her. On one single occasion I saw her violate the harmony of her character, to produce effect at a particular moment; but, almost invariably, I found her a true artist, worthy of Greece, and worthy at many moments to have her conceptions immortalised in marble.

Her range even in high tragedy is limited. She can only express the darker passions, and grief in its most desolate aspects. Nature has not gifted her with those softer and more flowery attributes that lend to pathos its utmost tenderness. She does not melt in tears, or calm or elevate the heart by the presence

of that tragic beauty that needs all the assaults of fate to make it show its immortal sweetness. Her noblest aspect is when sometimes she expresses truth in some severe shape, and rises, simple and austere, above the mixed elements around her. On the dark side, she is very great in hatred and revenge. I admired her more in Phèdre than in any other part in which I saw her ; the guilty love inspired by the hatred of a goddess was expressed, in all its symptoms, with a free and terrible naturalness, that almost suffocated the beholder. After she had taken the poison, the exhaustion and paralysis of the system,—the sad, cold, calm submission to Fate,—were still more grand.

I had heard so much about the power of her eye in one fixed look, and the expression she could concentrate in a single word, that the utmost results could only satisfy my expectations. It is, indeed, something magnificent to see the dark cloud give out such sparks, each one fit to deal a separate death ; but it was not that I admired most in her. It was the grandeur, truth, and depth of her conception of each part, and the sustained purity with which she represented it.

The French language from her lips is a divine dialect ; it is stripped of its national and personal peculiarities, and becomes what any language must, moulded by such a genius—the pure music of the heart and soul. I never could remember her tone in speaking any word : it was too perfect ; you had received the thought quite direct. Yet, had I never heard her speak a word, my mind would be filled by her attitudes. Nothing more graceful can be conceived, nor could the genius of sculpture surpass her management of the antique drapery.

She has no beauty, except in the intellectual severity of her outline, and she bears marks of race that will grow stronger every year, and make her ugly at last. Still it will be a *grandiose* gipsy, or rather Sibylline ugliness, well adapted to the expression of some tragic parts. Only it seems as if she could not live long; she expends force enough upon a part to furnish out a dozen common lives.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to her Mother

THE BABY

FLORENCE, *December* 1, 1849.

I do not know what to write about the baby, he changes so much, has so many characters. He is like me in that, for his father's character is simple and uniform, though not monotonous, any more than are the flowers of spring, flowers of the valley. Angelino is now in the most perfect, rosy health,—a very gay, impetuous, ardent, but sweet-tempered child. He seems to me to have nothing in common with his first babyhood, with its ecstatic smiles, its exquisite sensitiveness, and a distinction in the gesture and attitudes that struck everybody. He is now come to quite a knowing age,—fifteen months.

In the morning as soon as dressed, he signs to come into our room; then draws our curtain with his little dimpled hand, kisses me rather violently, pats my face, laughs, crows, shows his teeth, blows like the bellows, stretches himself, and says "*bravo*." Then, having shown off all his accomplishments, he expects, as a reward, to be tied in his chair, and have his playthings.

These engage him busily, but still he calls to us to sing and drum, to enliven the scene. Sometimes he summons me to kiss his hand, and laughs very much at this. Enchanting is that baby-laugh, all dimples and glitter,—so strangely arch and innocent! Then I wash and dress him. That is his great time. He makes it last as long as he can, insisting to dress and wash me the while, kicking, throwing the water about, and full of all manner of tricks, such as, I think, girls never dream of. Then comes his walk;—we have beautiful walks here for him, protected by fine trees, always warm in mid-winter. The bands are playing in the distance, and children of all ages are moving about, and sitting with their nurses. His walk and sleep give me about three hours in the middle of the day.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli to her Mother

A FAREWELL

FLORENCE, *May* 14, 1850.

I will believe I shall be welcome with my treasures—my husband and child. For me, I long so much to see you! Should anything hinder our meeting upon earth, think of your daughter, as one who always wished, at least, to do her duty, and who always cherished you, according as her mind opened to discover excellence.

Give dear love, too, to my brothers; and first to my eldest, faithful friend! Eugene; a sister's love to Ellen; love to my kind and good aunts, and to my dear cousin E—— God bless them!

I hope we shall be able to pass some time together,

yet, in this world. But if God decrees otherwise,—here and *Here after*,—my dearest mother,

Your loving child,

MARGARET.

LADY HESTER STANHOPE (1776-1839)

WAS the eldest daughter of Earl Stanhope, and niece of William Pitt, with whom she lived till his death in 1806. Four years later she left England to travel in the East, and eventually made her home on Mount Lebanon, where she was regarded with great veneration by the tribes. The last years of her life were spent in great distress, owing to her recklessness in money matters. Lady Hester was probably the most intrepid woman traveller of her time.

To H.R.H. Maxmilian Duke of Bavaria

A ROYAL VISITOR

JÔON, *June* 8, 1838.

HIGHNESS,—I cannot sufficiently appreciate the honour you intend me in wishing to visit my hermitage; but permit me to impose these conditions on you—that you say not a word more, neither you nor the noblemen in your suite, of those trifling services which you have so graciously and benevolently accepted. Allow me also to acquaint your highness, that, although I was in my time a woman of the world, for these last twenty years I have been nothing but a philosopher, who turns out of her road for nobody. When Alexander the Great visited Diogenes, he neither changed his dress nor moved his tub for him: pardon me, prince, if I imitate his example.

There was a time when my house was passable; but now there are many rooms in ruins for want of repairs—especially a large pavilion in the garden, tumbling down from an earthquake; so that I could not lodge more than three or four persons at a time. What lodging I have for you is, first of all, a little garden on the east side of my residence, with a small saloon, and outside of the door two mustabys,[1] where two persons might sleep. Adjoining the saloon is a bedroom, and at the back of it a sleeping-room for two valets, with mattresses on the floor, according to the custom of the country. The saloon has a trellis in front. Just out of the garden-gate is a little place to make coffee, or boil water for shaving; and opposite to it is another room for ordinary strangers, where two persons can sleep, and where Count Tattenbach was lodged. For the other servants there is room in one of the courtyards. As for my own divan, it has been in a ruinous state for some years, and I inhabit at present a badly furnished little room.

I beg your highness will consider the little garden, and the pavilion in it, which I have just mentioned, as your own, until the ship which you expect arrives. You can make your excursions in the mountain when you like. With you, you can bring two or three of the gentlemen of your suite, and these can make room for others in their turn. Only, I hope that the baron and Count Gaiety, as I call him (for, according to what the doctor tells me, during all your misfortunes he has always preserved his cheerfulness), will not come both together, because I have got a great deal to say to each. Thus, then, I shall expect your royal highness on Saturday evening.

[1] Stone seats placed against the wall.

I have the honour to salute you, prince, with the most perfect esteem and highest consideration, begging you to accept, with your known nobleness, the welcome of the dervise,

H. L. Stanhope.

Lady Hester Stanhope to Sir Francis Burdett, Bart.

PLAIN SPEAKING

Jôon, *July* 20, 1838.

My dear Burdett,—I am no fool, neither are you; but you might pass for one, if in good earnest you did not understand my letter. You tell me what is self-evident—that I have no right to inherit Colonel Needham's property, etc., neither has your daughter any right to inherit Mr. Coutts's property; but, in all probability, his wife, being aware that you and your family stood high in his estimation, paid that compliment to his memory. Lord Kilmorey, who had no children, being aware of General Needham's partiality towards Mr. Pitt, might, by his will, have allowed the property to return to the remaining branch of the Pitt family. Do not be afraid that I am going to give you any fresh trouble about this affair, notwithstanding I believe that you were some time hatching this stupid answer; but I do not owe you any grudge, as I know that it does not come from you: —I know where it comes from.

A lion of the desert, being caught in the huntsman's net, called in vain to the beasts of the field to assist him, and received from them about as shuffling an answer as I have received from you and previously

from Lord ——. A little field-mouse gnawed the master knot, and called to the lion to make a great effort, which burst the noose, and out came the lion stronger than ever.

I am now about building up every avenue to my premises, and there shall wait with patience, immured within the walls, till it please God to send me a little mouse; and whoever presumes to force my retirement, by scaling my walls or anything of the like, will be received by me as Lord Camelford would have received them.

HESTER LUCY STANHOPE.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE (1811–1896)

DAUGHTER of a clergyman, Dr. Lyman Beecher. She was born at Litchfield, Connecticut, and at the age of 21 removed to Cincinnati. In 1836 she married a teacher, Calvin E. Stowe, who afterwards became a Professor at Bawdoin College. Notwithstanding great disadvantages, she commenced, at the suggestion of her husband, a literary career, which brought her fame; and by the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" she greatly promoted the cause of anti-slavery.

To Miss May[1]

A DAY'S WORK

NEW HAVEN, CONN., *June* 21, 1838.

MY DEAR, DEAR GEORGIANA,—Only think how long it is since I have written to you, and how changed I

[1] The following letters of Mrs. Beecher Stowe are reprinted from her Life by Charles E. Stowe, by permission of Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston & Company, Ltd.

am since then—the mother of three children! Well, if I have not kept the reckoning of old times, let this last circumstance prove my apology, for I have been hand, heart, and head full since I saw you.

Now, to-day, for example, I'll tell you what I had on my mind from dawn to dewy eve. In the first place I waked about half after four and thought, "Bless me, how light it is! I must get out of bed and rap to wake up Mina, for breakfast must be had at six o'clock this morning." So out of bed I jump and seize the tongs, and pound, pound, pound over poor Mina's sleepy head, charitably allowing her about half an hour to get waked up in—that being the quantum of time that it takes me—or used to. Well, then baby wakes—quâ, quâ, quâ, so I give him his breakfast, dozing meanwhile and soliloquising as follows: "Now I must not forget to tell Mr. Stowe about the starch and dried apples"—doze—"ah, um, dear me! Why doesn't Mina get up? I don't hear her"—doze—"ah, um—I wonder if Mina has soap enough! I think there were two bars left on Saturday"—doze again—I wake again. "Dear me, broad daylight! I must get up and go down and see if Mina is getting breakfast." Up I jump and up wakes baby. "Now, little boy, be good and let mother dress, because she is in a hurry." I get my frock half on, and baby by that time has kicked himself down off his pillow, and is crying and fisting the bed-clothes in great order. I stop with one shoe off and one on to settle matters with him. Having planted him bolt upright and gone all up and down the chamber barefoot to get pillows and blankets to prop him up, I finish putting my frock on and hurry down to satisfy myself by actual observation that the

breakfast is in progress. Then back I come into the nursery, where, remembering that it is washing-day and that there is a great deal of work to be done, I apply myself vigorously to sweeping, dusting, and the setting to rights so necessary where there are three little mischiefs always pulling down as fast as one can put up.

Then there are Miss H—— and Miss E——, concerning whom Mary will furnish you with all suitable particulars, who are chatting, hallooing, or singing at the tops of their voices, as may suit their various states of mind, while the nurse is getting breakfast ready. This meal being cleared away, Mr. Stowe dispatched to market with various memoranda of provisions, etc., and the baby being washed and dressed, I begin to think what next must be done. I start to cut out some little dresses, have just calculated the length and got one breadth torn off when Master Harry makes a doleful lip and falls to crying with might and main. I catch him up and, turning round, see one of his sisters flourishing the things out of my work-box in fine style. Moving it away and looking the other side, I see the second little mischief seated by the hearth chewing coals and scraping up ashes with great apparent relish. Grandmother lays hold upon her and charitably offers to endeavour to quiet baby while I go on with my work. I set at it again, pick up a dozen pieces, measure them once more to see which is the right one, and proceed to cut out some others, when I see the twins on the point of quarrelling with each other. Number one pushes number two over. Number two screams: that frightens the baby, and he joins in. I call number one a naughty girl, take the persecuted one in my

arms, and endeavour to comfort her by trotting to the old lyric:

> So ride the gentlefolk,
> And so do we, so do we.

Meanwhile number one makes her way to the slop-jar and forthwith proceeds to wash her apron in it. Grandmother catches her by one shoulder, drags her away, and sets the jar up out of her reach. By and by the nurse comes up from her sweeping. I commit the children to her, and finish cutting out the frocks.

But let this suffice, for of such details as these are all my days made up. Indeed, my dear, I am but a mere drudge with few ideas beyond babies and housekeeping. As for thoughts, reflections, and sentiments, good lack! good lack!

I suppose I am a dolefully uninteresting person at present, but I hope I shall grow young again one of these days, for it seems to me matters cannot always stand as they do now.

Well, Georgy, this marriage is—yes, I will speak well of it, after all; for when I can stop and think long enough to discriminate my head from my heels, I must say that I think myself a fortunate woman both in husband and children. My children I would not change for all the ease, leisure, and pleasure that I could have without them. They are money on interest, whose value will be constantly increasing.

Harriet Beecher Stowe to Mrs. Follen

REMINISCENCES

ANDOVER, *February* 16, 1853.

MY DEAR MADAM,—I hasten to reply to your letter, to me the more interesting that I have long been ac-

quainted with you, and during all the nursery part of my life made daily use of your poems for children.

I used to think sometimes in those days that I would write to you, and tell you how much I was obliged to you for the pleasure which they gave us all.

So you want to know something about what sort of woman I am! Well, if this is any object, you shall have statistics free of charge. To begin, then, I am a little bit of a woman—somewhat more than forty, about as thin and dry as a pinch of snuff; never very much to look at in my best days, and looking like a used-up article now.

I was married when I was twenty-five years old to a man rich in Greek and Hebrew, Latin and Arabic, and alas! rich in nothing else. When I went to housekeeping, my entire stock of china for parlor and kitchen was bought for eleven dollars. That lasted very well for two years, till my brother was married and brought his bride to visit me. I then found, on review, that I had neither plates nor teacups to set a table for my father's family; wherefore I thought it best to reinforce the establishment by getting me a tea-set that cost ten dollars more, and this, I believe, formed my whole stock-in-trade for some years.

But then I was abundantly enriched with wealth of another sort.

I had two little curly-headed twin daughters to begin with, and my stock in this line has gradually increased, till I have been the mother of seven children: the most beautiful and the most loved of whom lies buried near my Cincinnati residence. . . . I allude to this here because I have often felt that much that is in that book ["Uncle Tom"] had its root in the awful

scenes and bitter sorrows of that summer. It has left now, I trust, no trace on my mind, except a deep compassion for the sorrowful, especially for mothers who are separated from their children.

During long years of struggling with poverty and sickness, and a hot, debilitating climate, my children grew up around me. The nursery and the kitchen were my principal fields of labour. Some of my friends, pitying my trials, copied and sent a number of little sketches from my pen to certain liberally paying "Annuals" with my name. With the first money that I earned in this way I bought a feather-bed! for as I had married into poverty, and without a dowry, and as my husband had only a large library of books, and a great deal of learning, the bed and pillows were thought the most profitable investment. After this I thought that I had discovered the philosopher's stone, so when a new carpet or mattress was going to be needed, or when, at the close of the year, it began to be evident that my family accounts, like poor Dora's, "wouldn't add up," then I used to say to my faithful friend and factotum, Anna, who shared all my joys and sorrows, "No," if you will keep the babies and attend to the things in the house for one day, I'll write a piece, and then we shall be out of the scrape." So I became an author—very modest, at first, I do assure you, and remonstrating very seriously with the friends who had thought it best to put my name to the pieces by way of getting up a reputation; and if ever you see a woodcut of me, with an immoderately long nose, on the cover of all the U. S. Almanacs, I wish you to take notice, that I have been forced into it contrary to my natural modesty by the imperative solicitations

of my dear five thousand friends and the public generally. . . . I suffer exquisitely in writing these things. It may be truly said that I write with my heart's blood. Many times in writing "Uncle Tom's Cabin" I thought my health would fail utterly; but I prayed earnestly that God would help me till I got through, and still I am pressed beyond measure and above strength.

This horror, this nightmare abomination! can it be in my country! It lies like lead on my heart, it shadows my life with sorrow; the more so that I feel, as for my own brothers, for the South, and am pained by every horror I am obliged to write, as one who is forced by some awful oath to disclose in court some family disgrace. Many times I have thought that I must die, and yet I pray God that I may live to see something done. I shall in all probability be in London in May: shall I see you?

It seems to me so odd and dream-like that so many persons desire to see me, and now I cannot help thinking that they will think, when they do, that God hath chosen "the weaklings of this world."

If I live till spring I shall hope to see Milton's grave, and Shakespeare's mulberry-tree, and the good land of my fathers,—old, old, England! May that day come.

Yours affectionately,

H. B. Stowe.

Harriet Beecher Stowe to her Husband

CHARLES KINGSLEY AT HOME

Paris, *November 7*, 1856.

My dear Husband,—On the 28th, when your last was written, I was at Charles Kingsley's. It seemed

odd enough to Mary and me to find ourselves, long after dark, alone in a hack, driving towards the house of a man whom we never had seen (nor his wife then).

My heart fluttered as, after rumbling a long way through the dark, we turned into a yard. We knocked at a door and were met in the hall by a man who stammers a little in his speech, and whose inquiry, "Is this Mrs. Stowe?" was our first positive introduction. Ushered into a large, pleasant parlor lighted by a coal fire, which flickered on comfortable chairs, lounges, pictures, statuettes, and book-cases, we took a good view of him. He is tall, slender, with blue eyes, brown hair, and a hale, well-browned face, and somewhat loose-jointed withal. His wife is a real Spanish beauty.

How we did talk and go on for three days! I guess he is tired. I'm sure we were. He is a nervous, excitable being, and talks with head, shoulders, arms, and hands, while his hesitance makes it the harder. Of his theology I will say more some other time. He also has been through the great distress, the "Conflict of Ages," but has come out at a different end from Edward, and stands with John Foster, though with more positiveness than he.

He laughed a good deal at many stories I told him of father, and seemed delighted to hear about him. But he is, what I did not expect, a zealous Churchman; insists that the Church of England is the finest and broadest platform a man can stand on, and that the Thirty-nine Articles are the only ones he could subscribe to. I told him you thought them the best summary (of doctrine) you knew, which pleased him greatly.

Harriet Beecher Stowe to her Husband

THE GLAMOUR OF ROME

March 1, 1857.

My dear Husband,—Every day is opening to me a new world of wonders here in Italy. I have been in the Catacombs, where I was shown many memorials of the primitive Christians, and to-day we are going to the Vatican. The weather is sunny and beautiful beyond measure, and flowers are springing in the fields on every side. Oh, my dear, how I do long to have you here to enjoy what you are so much better fitted to appreciate than I—this wonderful combination of the past and the present, of what has been and what is!

Think of strolling leisurely through the Forum, of seeing the very stones that were laid in the time of the Republic, of rambling over the ruined Palace of the Caesars, of walking under the Arch of Titus, of seeing the Dying Gladiator, and whole ranges of rooms filled with wonders of art, all in one morning! All this I did on Saturday, and only wanted you. You know so much more and could appreciate so much better. At the Palace of the Caesars, where the very dust is a *mélange* of exquisite marbles, I saw for the first time an acanthus growing, and picked my first leaf.

Our little *ménage* moves on prosperously; the doctor takes excellent care of us and we of him. One sees everybody here at Rome, John Bright, Mrs. Hemans's son, Mrs. Gaskell, etc., etc. Over five thousand English travellers are said to be here. Jacob Abbott and wife are coming. Rome is a world! Rome is an astonishment! Papal Rome is an enchantress! Old as she

is, she is like Ninon d'Enclos—the young fall in love with her.

You will hear next from us at Naples.

Affectionately yours,

H. B. S.

Harriet Beecher Stowe to George Eliot

THE BEAUTIES OF FLORIDA

MANDARIN, FLORIDA, *May* 11, 1872 (*Begun April* 4).

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was very glad to get your dear little note—sorry to see by it that you are not in your full physical force. Owing to the awkwardness and misunderstanding of publishers, I am not reading "Middlemarch," as I expected to be, here in these orange shades: they don't send it, and I am too far out of the world to get it. I felt, when I read your letters, how glad I should be to have you here in our Florida cottage, in the wholly new, wild, woodland life. Though resembling Italy in climate, it is wholly different in the appearance of nature—the plants, the birds, the animals, all different. The green tidiness and culture of England here gives way to a wild and rugged savageness of beauty. Every tree bursts forth with flowers; wild vines and creepers execute delirious gambles, and weave and interweave in interminable labyrinths. Yet here, in the great sandy plains back of our house, there is a constant, wondering sense of beauty in the wild, wonderful growths of nature. First of all, the pines—high as the stone-pines of Italy—with long leaves, eighteen inches long, through which there is a constant dreamy sound, as if of dashing waters. The live-oaks and the water-oaks, narrow-leaved ever-

greens, which grow to enormous size, and whose branches are draped with long festoons of gray moss. There is a great, wild park of these trees back of us, which, with the dazzling, varnished green of the new spring leaves and the swaying draperty of moss, looks like a sort of enchanted grotto. Underneath grow up hollies and ornamental flowering shrubs, and the yellow jessamine climbs into and over everything with fragrant golden bells and buds, so that sometimes the foliage of a tree is wholly hidden in its embrace.

This wild, wonderful, bright, and vivid growth, that is all new, strange, and unknown by name to me, has a charm for me. It is the place to forget the outside world, and live in one's self. And if you were here, we would go together and gather azaleas, and white lilies, and silver bells, and blue iris. The flowers keep me painting in a sort of madness. I have just finished a picture of white lilies that grow in the moist land by the watercourses. I am longing to begin on blue iris. Artist, poet, as you are by nature, you ought to see all these things, and if you would come here I would take you in heart and house, and you should have a little room in our cottage. The history of the cottage is this: I found a hut built close to a great live-oak twenty-five feet in girth, and with overarching boughs eighty feet up in the air, spreading like a firmament, and all swaying with mossy festoons. We began to live here, and gradually we improved the hut by lath, plaster, and paper. Then we threw out a wide veranda all round, for in these regions the veranda is the living-room of the house. Ours had to be built around the trunk of the tree, so that our cottage has a peculiar and original air, and seems as

if it were half tree, or a something that had grown out of the tree. We added on parts, and have thrown out gables and chambers, as a tree throws out new branches, till our cottage is like nobody else's, and yet we settle into it with real enjoyment. There are all sorts of queer little rooms in it, and we are accommodating at this present a family of seventeen souls. In front, the beautiful, grand St. John's stretches five miles from shore to shore, and we watch the steamboats flying back and forth to the great world we are out of. On all sides, large orange-trees, with their dense shade and ever-vivid green, shut out the sun, so that we can sit, and walk, and live in the open air. Our winter here is only cool, bracing, outdoor weather without snow. No month without flowers blooming in the open air, and lettuce and peas in the garden. The summer range is about 90°, but the sea-breezes keep the air delightfully fresh. Generally we go north, however, for three months of summer. Well, I did not mean to run on about Florida, but the subject runs away with me, and I want you to visit us in spirit if not personally.

My poor rabbi!—he sends you some Arabic, which I fear you cannot read: on diablerie he is up to his ears in knowledge, having read all things in all tongues from the Talmud down. . . .

Ever lovingly yours,

H. B. Stowe.

AGNES STRICKLAND (1796–1874)

DAUGHTER of Thomas Strickland of Reydon Hall, Suffolk. She began writing at an early age, but her best known work

is "The Lives of the Queens of England," a book which is still a recognised authority on the subject. Her life was uneventful and was spent for the most part at Southwold in Suffolk.

To Miss Porter[1]

THE DRAWING-ROOM

May 28, 1840.

I have not written to you, my dearest, kindest friend, since the great affair of my presentation, which was beautifully arranged for me by the amiable Howards, Mrs. Howard kindly regretting that (she was pleased to say) she could not have the gratification of presenting me herself, but would consign me to her venerable friend, Lady Stourton, who was in all respects one of the most distinguished ladies I could have.

It was an agitating but gratifying day; and fortunately I was so little embarrassed that I absolutely forgot, till I felt the train gently replaced on my arm after I had gone through the ceremonial, nor was I conscious of having so many yards of velvet sweeping behind me. When my name was announced to her Majesty, she smiled and looked most kindly. Nothing could be more gracious than her reception of my homage.

Prince Albert returned my curtsey with a very courteous bow, and I passed from the presence with feelings of increased interest for the royal pair, but heard the most bitter and cruel remarks uttered

[1] The following letters of Miss Strickland are reprinted from her Life by J. M. Strickland, by kind permission of Messrs. William Blackwood & Sons.

by some of the ladies who had preceded me through the ante-room, on what they styled the ungracious and repulsive behaviour of the Queen to themselves and others. I am sure she was all sweetness to me, and those who thought so hardly of her had no business to intrude themselves upon her under the pretext of paying their homage.

On Monday I attended the birthday Drawing-room, and a brilliant scene it was. The Queen gave me a nod and smile of friendly recognition when the lord-in-waiting pronounced my name. Nothing could be more gracious. She seemed to understand my feelings towards her. After all was over, I joined the dear Mackinnons in the corridor. Louisa Mackinnon looked lovely in her excellently fancied dress, and is really one of the sweetest and most unaffected girls I know. You would have liked to see me in my Court costume—violet velvet, lined with primrose, over Brussels lace and white satin; and from the absence of trimming and frippery, my nice historical dress cost less than many of the butterfly costumes round me. It was very suitable for the occasion, and will be useful.

You will, I know, rejoice to hear that I have had one of the most gratifying notes in the world from Guizot, the French ambassador, on "The Lives of the Queens." He has, besides, allowed me to quote this proud testimonial to the work in the Introduction to the third volume.

Most ardently do I hope we may meet in town. I rejoice to hear you are daily improving in health; and believe me ever, with much love, your affectionate friend,

AGNES STRICKLAND.

Agnes Strickland to her Mother

A SCOTCH WEDDING

[1846.]

. . . The bridal was a beautiful scene, and very interesting. Constance Crauford, my dear mother, being a very superior and charming young woman, behaved with equal good sense and good feeling. On the eventful morning she took her usual seat at the breakfast-table and poured out the coffee as calmly as if nothing remarkable was to take place that day.

At two o'clock all the ladies staying at the castle took a hasty lunch with Mrs. Crauford in her bed-chamber, as all the other rooms were required for the preparations. At three we assembled in full dress in the drawing-room. As none but the bride and her maiden train were to be robed in white, I wore a blue satin dress with white lace robings, Lady Adelaide Hastings a rose-coloured striped *glacé* silk—indeed we were the only gay butterflies, excepting the bride's-maids. There were two ceremonies—a white-robed Hymen and a black one—the bridegroom being an Episcopalian, while the bride, her parents, and brother were Presbyterians. So, after Dr. Buchanan of the Free Church had declared Mr. Fairlee and Constance man and wife, the bridal party went into the library, where the Episcopal minister from Ayr was to unite the bride and bridegroom's hands according to the rites of the Anglican Church, having brought with him surplice, scarf, hood, and licence for the important occasion. He went through his office rather sulkily, to my regret. As soon as the white-robed Hymen had concluded the ceremony, we all returned to the

drawing-room, when the bridegroom's best-man cut the wedding-cake, and we all drew for three oracular prizes attached to the bouquets of orange-blossoms that adorned it. These comprised a ring, a sixpence, and a thimble. The latter, which indicated a life of single blessedness, was drawn by the handsomest bachelor present, Mr. Burnet, laird of Gadsgarth. After this fun was over, the bride's-maids pinned on the elegant favours, and by that time the dinner was announced, which was served in the spacious banqueting hall—a dinner that bonnie King Jamie would have rejoiced to see. The bride sat by the side of the newly wedded husband, looking a perfect picture in her splendid veil and virgin white; and the sunbeams pouring through the painted-glass windows gave a beautiful effect to the scene. Two bands stationed without played the lively Scotch air, "Wooed an' married an' a'."

At eight the bride retired to change her dress, and having kissed all the ladies, was led to her carriage by the bridegroom, whereupon Lady Adelaide Hastings and I, with the six bride's-maidens, flung each an old white-satin shoe after it for good luck. At the park gates a shower of old shoes of humbler pretensions flew round the carriage in all directions, flung by the cottars and their children. As for the politer white-satin shoes, they were eagerly collected by the spectators as memorials of Miss Crauford's wedding-day.

Our festivities were to conclude with a ball given to the tenantry and retainers in the great barn, which was to be lighted up and decorated for the occasion. At ten o'clock the bride's-maids, and her son, Captain Reginald Crauford, conducted us through the woods

to the festive scene. The barn, with the arms and crest of the Crauford family wrought in flowers in the roof, and hung with evergreens, rather resembled a baronial castle than what it was, being splendidly illuminated, and really made a fine ballroom.

We were all expected to dance, and Captain Crauford set us a very good example by capering unweariedly with the lassies, who testified their good sense of the young laird's condescension in choosing them by very reverential curtseys. He certainly, in his young, pretty partners, was better off than we poor ladies were. My partner was an old man named Jemmy White, a very indefatigable dancer, who insisted that I should dance a reel with him, at the same time giving me an encouraging pat on the shoulder, as if I had been a little child, telling me "I was a bonnie lassie, and should do as well as ony o' them." I wish you could have seen me footing it away with my droll old man, and a *beau garçon* for my alternate man. Well, my partner was so proud and elated with having got me, that he chose to change the reel into a polka by turning me round and round till I was out of breath with laughing.

Miss Maxwell and Miss Cunninghame got partners of the same grade; only my old man begged me not "to leave with my Lady Crauford, as there would be more fun going on after her departure." However, we had had enough of it, and departed with our amiable hostess at twelve, leaving Captain Crauford to conclude the revel.

The following morning I took leave of Craufordland Castle and my dear friends for the kind Homes of Avontoun House, where your next letter will find me.

Ever affectionately yours,

AGNES STRICKLAND.

Agnes Strickland to her Sister, Jane Strickland

HOLIDAY-MAKING

LENNOXLOVE, 1852.

MY DEAR JANE,—. . . I have been leading a merry life here with dear Georgina Stuart in these old halls during what she calls her bachelor *régime*. On Friday last we all set out on a real expedition in the elegant phaeton. I confess I rather trembled when I saw the reins in the delicate hands of my fair companion, who drove a spirited pair of spanking chesnuts over mountain and lea, to say nothing of deep glens and ravines. To be sure, we had the groom in the rumble ; but then he, as well as ourselves, might have been smashed in a moment if the carriage in turning sharp corners swung us over a rock or soused us into a rushing river. However, the fair Georgina had undertaken nothing but what she was fully equal to. Unfortunately, there was no one to see the grand swell we made—she being the loveliest and most elegant young woman I ever saw ; and so affectionate and sweet in her manners.

Our first halt was at her uncle Sir Patrick Stuart's, where we lunched, and feasted on strawberries and cream. Then we proceeded to Yester, the seat of the Marquis of Tweeddale, and there the young ladies of the family and a bevy of noble damsels were to meet us by appointment at the Goblin's Cave. Georgina resigned the reins to the groom, and we proceeded on foot to the eyrie whereon the magic-built castle sits in her lonely, ruined majesty so embosomed in thick woods that we could not see its ivy-mantled keep and turrets till we were under the walls. The Goblin's Cave is at the foot of the ruins, just above a brawling

little stream called the Tyne. Lady Jane Hay frightened one of her guests by hiding behind a rock and bouncing out upon her to personate the Goblin.

The ladies were disappointed that I would not go into the cave, Lady Jane and Lady Emily Hay having kindly brought with them tapers and lucifer-matches to guide my steps therein; but there was a phalanx of tall nettles to storm, and I did not wish to endanger the virgin whiteness of my bonnet, so I contented myself with examining the localities.

When we descended the wooded steep, Lady Jane Hay volunteered to drive me through the beautiful grounds, while Georgina with Lady Julia and the rest of the party walked. I like Lady Jane very much indeed.

. . . Yesterday we lunched with Sir George and Lady Susan Suttie. A lovely drive among the mountains of North Berwick Law, and were feasted and made much of by the amiable family. Lady Susan sang sweetly Scotch songs to please me, and though it poured with rain, the girls insisted on my going to the porridge-making. I made some demurs on account of my blue damask dress, but Miss Suttie lent me a linsey-woolsey skirt, and provided Georgina with another. So we left our gala dresses behind, and got into Lady Susan's low phaeton; and the youngest child, a pet named Kitty, sat on a low stool in front to drive us and her mamma. The rain ceased before we arrived at the farm, where the manufacture of the porridge was to take place.

Little Kitty would help old Jenny Lamb to make the porridge. Twelve gallons of water, to which four pecks of Scotch meal were added formed the simple

receipt—Kitty with her own hands pouring the meal into the copper, while old Jenny actively stirred the mixture. Lady Susan seated herself quietly on an ale-stool, while we stood round to see the process. Presently they shouted that it was done, and old Jenny quenched the fire, lest the porridge should burn. Then it was divided into fifteen single messes and seven double ones, and ladled into very clean little wooden stoups for the shearers' suppers, who had also a great "bap" or roll to eat with their mess. One stoup was reserved for our own use. So we all adjourned to the pretty little parlour to eat porridge and cream, which was dainty fare; and then Lady Susan and I re-entered the phaeton, with our little black-eyed fairy to drive us all around the rocks, which rise a mighty range of battlements to shut in the gardens and house plantations. We had tea and coffee on our return, and, after restoring our borrowed garments to their rightful owners, bade adieu to their kind family with regret.

I cannot tell you how beautiful Lennoxlove is, or how glorious the harvest. It is the garden of Scotland. Thank the dear mother for her pretty note. And with love to her and yourself, ever affectionately yours,

AGNES STRICKLAND.

Agnes Strickland to her Mother

KING EDWARD VII.

September 12, 1861.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—. . . I was presented last night at the ball to the Prince of Wales by General Bruce,

though it seems this was not according to etiquette—only his Royal Highness wished for the introduction. He was very gracious, thanked me for having sent him my books, "which," he said, "had afforded him much pleasure," though, speaking of the Bachelor Kings, he assured me "he did not mean to be one."

In person he is really a very pretty fellow, small in stature, but very well-shaped, and dignified in appearance, though timid in manner. His eyes, eyebrows, and hair are really beautiful; he has a handsome, well-cut, aquiline nose, full lips, beautiful teeth, and an agreeable smile. He blushed, and was a little agitated while speaking with me. He danced unweariedly and very elegantly, though the height and fulness of some of his partners nearly eclipsed him.

Agnes Strickland to her Sister, Jane Strickland

QUEEN ALEXANDRA

1863-4.

. . . I had a capital view of the Princess of Wales while three ladies who preceded me were making their curtseys. She is very pretty, graceful, and intellectual in appearance, smaller than the Queen, but fairy-like and exquisitely proportioned. She wore a white silk skirt, with deep lace tunics, with red lilac aerophane to set them out, a train of the same colour, and a diamond necklace and tiara. She looked very royal and girlish too. She gave me a very gracious bow; so did the Prince of Wales, who is very handsome, though short in stature. He must have been very proud of his beautiful wife. Prince Alfred, who stood by him,

is a head taller, and dark. Princess Helena and Princess Mary of Cambridge were there, the latter not looking her best.

ANNA JAMESON (1794–1860)

ELDEST daughter of Brownell Murphy. She wrote several books, chiefly on art criticism, her best known work being "Sacred and Legendary Art." Mrs. Jameson was a much-valued friend and correspondent of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

To Catherine Sedgwick [1]

THE TENDRILS OF LIFE

EALING, *October* 10, 1849.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—As I was returning home yesterday in the railway train from Derbyshire, I was thinking of you, and that I must and should write to you forthwith; and lo! as I was walking up the road homewards I met the postman, who touched his hat, and put a letter into my hand—yours by Mrs. Follen, but dated so long ago, July, and this is October. As I was devouring the lines by the imperfect light, I had nearly been run over by a stage-coach. I had heard of Mrs. Follen's arrival, and only waited her arrival in town to hold out my arms to her. Yes, I remember her well; and, for her own sake and for yours, I shall be charmed to see her again. How I feel sometimes the want of a residence in town, the

[1] This letter is reprinted from Mrs. Macpherson's "Memoir of Anna Jameson," by kind permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.

want of a home to which I could welcome my friends! This little cell in my mother's cottage is a sort of nest which just holds my books and me; and though Wordsworth talks of books having tendrils strong as flesh and blood, I feel often all the difference; but not, I believe, on consideration, that it is we who have the tendrils and twine round our books. But, in any case, mine don't, except about very few: yours, perhaps—books which are not mere books. How is it with you? With me it is as if the roots of my life and its tendrils too grew stronger as I grew older, and social life is becoming more necessary to me just as my power of commanding it is lessened; but we must do the best we can. Is there no hope of your coming to England—none, not even in the far future? But at least you can write a little oftener; and so can I for that matter. Your last I received on April 4. I don't know how often I have written to you since.

But I have not yet told you something in which you will sympathise with me truly. My niece Gerardine was married on September 4 to Robert Macpherson, an artist by profession, of a good Highland family, and a good, kind, honest-hearted man. I was against the union at first; but what seemed a sudden rash fancy on both sides became respectable from its constancy. I am glad now that I yielded. She may probably have to suffer: there will be a struggle with the world; but at least the natural life will have flowed in its healthy, natural course, and the trials which come will mature, and will not embitter, the character. I hold to the right of every human being to work out their own salvation; and the old have a right to advise, but no right to prescribe an existence to the young. So Geddie

has married the man whom she preferred from the first moment she saw him, and as yet they are enchanted with each other. They are now in Scotland, residing among his friends and relations, and they return to Rome, which will be their residence for some years, in about three weeks. Then I lose my child, poor little thing; and the present state of Italy makes me anxious, but he understands his position, the place, and the people; and I hope the best. Probably I shall be in Italy myself next year. . . .

Do you know Mrs. Browning, who was Elizabeth Barrett, the poetess? I have had a charming letter from her. Think of the poor invalid being the mother of a fine boy! . . . I don't, and won't admire Jenny Lind, whose success has been of a kind to make all such triumphs ridiculous. She is an accomplished singer, and *second-rate* actress; we have had so many better! Of my dear friend Lady Byron, I can only say that she is rather better than she was a month ago. It is a hopeless state of invalidism, but such a tenacity of life that I do not give way to terror about her now, as I used to do. . . .

Ever, dearest Catherine,

Your affectionate friend.

FANNY KEMBLE (1809–1893)

DAUGHTER of John Philip Kemble, the great actor; made her début at Covent Garden in 1829 as Juliet. She was a great success, and for three years played in London. In 1832 she went to America and married Mr. Butler, a planter. Later she returned to England, and engaged in literary and dramatic work.

FANNY KEMBLE

(MRS. BUTLER)

From a lithograph, after a drawing by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.

p. 428]

To ——[1]

PRIVILEGES OF CHILDHOOD

HARLEY STREET, LONDON, *Sunday, December* 26, 1841.

DEAR HARRIET,—I must tell you a droll little incident that occurred the day of our leaving Bowood. As I was crossing the great hall, holding little F—— by the hand, Lord Lansdowne and Moore, who were talking at the other end, came towards me, and, while the former expressed kind regrets for our departure, Moore took up the child and kissed her, and set her down again, when she clutched hold of my gown, and trotted silently out of the hall by my side. As the great red door closed behind us, on our way to my rooms, she said, in a tone that I thought indicated some stifled sense of offended dignity, "Pray, mamma, who was that little gentleman?"

Now, Harriet, though Moore's fame is great, his stature is little, and my belief is that my three-year-old daughter was suffering under an impression that she had been taken a liberty with by some enterprising schoolboy. Oh, Harriet! think if one of his own Irish rosebuds of sixteen had received that poet's kiss, how long it would have been before she would have washed that side of her face! I believe if he had bestowed it upon me, I would have kept mine from water for its sake, till bedtime. Indeed, when first "Lalla Rookh" came out I think I might have made a little circle on that cheek, and dedicated it to Tom Moore and dirt for ever; that is—till I forgot all about it,

[1] This and the three following letters are reprinted from "Records of a Later Life," by Frances A. Kemble, by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

and my habit of plunging my face into water whenever I dress got the better of my finer feelings. But, you see, he didn't kiss my stupid little child's intelligent mother, and this is the way that fool Fortune misbestows her favours. She is spiteful, too, that whirlgigg woman with the wheel. I am not an autograph collector, of course; if I was I shouldn't have got the prize I received yesterday, when Rogers, after mending a pen for me, and tenderly caressing the nib of it with a knife as sharp as his own tongue, wrote, in his beautiful, delicate, fine hand, by way of trying it:

> The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
> Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.

Is that a quotation from himself or some one else? or was it an impromptu?—a seer's vision, and friend's warning? Chi sa? . . .

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Fanny Kemble to Harriet ———

A PRESENTATION AT COURT

HARLEY STREET, *May* 1, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,—. . . You ask about my going to the Drawing-room, which happened thus: the Duke of Rutland dined some little time ago at the Palace, and speaking of the late party at Belvoir, mentioned me, when the Queen asked why I didn't have myself presented. The duke called the next day at our house, but we did not see him, and he being obliged to go out of town, left a message for me with

Lady Londonderry, to the effect that her Majesty's interest about me (curiosity would have been the more exact word, I suspect) rendered it imperative that I should go to the Drawing-room; and indeed, Lady Londonderry's authoritative "Of course you'll go," given in her most *gracious* manner, left me no doubt whatever as to my duty in that respect, especially as the message duly delivered by her was followed up by a letter from the duke, from Newmarket, who, from the midst of his bets, handicaps, sweepstakes, and cups, wrote me over again all that he had bid the marchioness tell me. Wherefore, having no objection whatever to go to Court (except, indeed, the expense of my dress, the idea of which caused me no slight trepidation, as I had already exceeded my year's allowance), I referred the matter to my supreme authority; and it being settled that I was to go, I ordered my tail, and my top, train, and feathers, and went. And this is the whole story, with this postscript, that, not owning a single diamond, I hired a handsome set for the occasion from Abud and Collingwood, every single stone of which darted a sharp point of nervous anxiety into my brain and bosom the whole time I wore them. . .

I suffered agonies of nervousness, and, I rather think, did all sorts of awkward things; but so, I dare say, do other people in the same predicament, and I did not trouble my head much about my various *mis*-performances. One thing, however, I can tell you, if her Majesty has seen me, I have not seen her; and should be quite excusable in cutting her wherever I met her. "A cat may look at *a* king," it is said; but how about looking at *the* Queen? In great uncertainty of mind on this point, I did not look at my

sovereign lady. I kissed a soft, white hand, which I believe was hers; I saw a pair of very handsome legs, in very fine silk stockings, which I am convinced were not hers, but am inclined to attribute to Prince Albert, and this is all I perceived of the whole royal family of England, for I made a sweeping curtsey to the "good remainders of the Court," and came away with no impression but that of a crowded mass of full-dressed confusion, and neither know how I got in or out of it. . . .

Yours ever,
FANNY.

Fanny Kemble to ——

CHARACTERISTICS OF MACREADY

KING STREET, *Wednesday*, 23, 1840.

The staircase I have to go up to my dressing-room at the Princess's Theatre is one with which you are unacquainted, my dearest Hal, for it is quite in another part of the house, beyond the green-room, and before you come to the stage. . . . Not only had I this inconvenient distance and height to go, but the dressing-room appointed for me had not even a fireplace in it; at this I remonstrated, and am now accommodated decently in a room with a fire, though in the same inconvenient position as regards the stage. . . . Mr. Maddox assured me that Macready poisoned every place he went into, to such a degree, with musk and perfumes, that if he were to give up his room to me, I should not be able to breathe in it. With my passion for perfumes, this, however, did not appear to me so

certain ; but the room I now have answers my purpose quite well enough. . . .

Macready is not pleasant to act with, as he keeps no specific time for his exits or entrances, comes on while one is in the middle of a soliloquy, and goes off while one is in the middle of a speech to him. He growls and prowls, and roams and foams, about the stage in every direction, like a tiger in his cage, so that I never know on what side of me he means to be ; and keeps up a perpetual snarling and grumbling like the aforesaid tiger, so that I never feel quite sure that he *has done*, and that it is my turn to speak. I do not think fifty pounds a night would hire me to play another engagement with him ; but I only say, I don't think—fifty pounds a night is a consideration four times a week, and I have not forgotten the French proverb, "*Il ne faut pas dire, fontaine, jamais de ton eau je ne boirai.*"

I do not know how Desdemona might have affected me under other circumstances, but my only feeling about acting it with Mr. Macready is dread of his personal violence. I quail at the idea of his laying hold of me in those terrible, passionate scenes ; for in *Macbeth* he pinched me black and blue, and almost tore the point lace from my head. I am sure my little finger will be rebroken, and as for that smothering in bed, "Heaven have mercy upon me!" as poor Desdemona says. If that foolish creature wouldn't persist in *talking* long after she has been smothered and stabbed to death, one might escape by the off side of the bed, and leave the bolster to be questioned by Emilia, and apostrophised by Othello ; but she will uplift her testimony after death to her husband's

amiable treatment of her, and even the bolster wouldn't be stupid enough for that.

Did it ever occur to you what a witness to Othello's agony in murdering his wretched wife his inefficient clumsiness in the process was—his half-smothering, his half-stabbing her? *That* man not to be able to kill *that* woman outright, with one hand on her throat, or one stroke of his dagger. How tortured he must have been, to have bungled so at his work!

I wish I was with you and Dorothy at St. Leonards instead of struggling here for my life—livelihood, at any rate—with Macready; but that's foolish. He can't *touch* me to-night, that's one comfort, for I am Queen Katherine.

Farewell, believe me,

Ever yours most respectfully,

FANNY.

Fanny Kemble to ——

MACREADY AGAIN

KING STREET, *Friday, February* 25, 1845.

DEAR HAL,— . . . I got through Desdemona very well, as far as my personal safety was concerned; for though I fell on the stage in real hysterics at the end of one of those horrible scenes with Othello, Macready was more considerate than I had expected, did not rebreak my little finger, and did not really smother me in bed. I played the part fairly well, and wish you had seen it. I was tolerably satisfied with it myself, which, you know, I am not often, with my own theatrical performances. . . . I really believe Macready cannot help being as odious as he is on the stage. He very

nearly made me faint last night in *Macbeth* with crushing my broken finger, and, by way of apology, merely coolly observed that he really could not answer for himself in such a scene, and that I ought to wear a splint; and truly, if I act much more with him, I think I shall require several splints, for several broken limbs. I have been rehearsing *Hamlet* with him this morning for three hours. I do not mind his tiresome particularity on the stage, for, though it all goes to making himself the only object of everything and everybody, he works very hard, and is zealous, and conscientious, and laborious in his duty, which is a merit in itself. But I think it is rather *mean* (as the children say) of him to refuse to act in such plays as *King John*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, which are pieces of his own too, to oblige me; whilst I have studied expressly for him, Desdemona, Ophelia, Cordelia, parts quite out of my line, merely that his plays may be strengthened by my name. Moreover, he has not scrupled to ask me to study new parts, in new plays which have been either written expressly only for him, or cut down to suit his peculiar requisitions. This, however, I have declined doing. Anything of Shakespeare's is good enough, and too good, for me. . . . I shall have a nausea of fright till after I have done singing in Ophelia to-morrow night.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806–1861)

WAS the daughter of Mr. Moulton Barrett, a wealthy West India planter. Although a great invalid, she attained wide recognition as a poetess, and among those who were

attracted by her work was Robert Browning. She afterwards married him in spite of the opposition of her father, with whom she was never reconciled. She continued to write after her marriage, which was a singularly happy one. Mrs. Browning was no less celebrated as a letter-writer than a poetess.

To Leigh Hunt

ON "AURORA LEIGH"

BAGNI DI LUCCA, *October* 6, 1857.

DEAR FRIEND,—I will say, for I feel it must be something as good as friendship that can forgive and understand this silence, so much like the veriest human kind of ingratitude. When I look back and think—all this time after that letter, and not a sign made—I wonder. Yet if you knew! First of all, we were silent because we waited for information which you seemed to desire. . . . Then there were sadder reasons. Poor *Aurora*, that you were so more than kind to (oh, how can I think of it?), has been steeped in tears, and some of them of a very bitter sort. Your letter was addressed to my husband, you knowing by your delicate, true instinct where your praise would give most pleasure; but I believe Robert had not the heart to write when I felt that I should not have the spirits to add a word in the proper key. When we came here from Florence a few months ago to get repose and cheerfulness from the sight of the mountains, we said to ourselves that we would speak to you at ease—instead of which the word was taken from our own mouth, and we have done little but sit by sickbeds and meditate on gastric fevers. So disturbed we have been—so sad! our darling, precious child the last victim. To see him lying still on his

golden curls, with cheeks too scarlet to suit the poor, patient eyes, looking so frightfully like an angel! It was very hard. But this is over, I do thank God, and we are on the point of carrying back our treasure with us to Florence to-morrow, quite recovered, if a little thinner and weaker, and the young voice as merry as ever. You are aware that that child I am more proud of than twenty *Auroras*, even after Leigh Hunt has praised them. He is eight years old, has never been "crammed," but reads English, Italian, French, German, and plays the piano—then, is the sweetest child! sweeter than he looks. When he was ill he said to me, "You pet! don't be unhappy about *me*. Think it's a boy in the street, and be a little sorry but not unhappy." Who could not be unhappy, I wonder.

I never saw your book called "The Religion of the Heart." It's the only book of yours I never saw, and I mean to wipe out that reproach on the soonest day possible. I receive more dogmas, perhaps (my "perhaps" being in the dark rather), than you do. I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ in the intensest sense—that He was God absolutely. But for the rest, I am very unorthodox—about the Spirit, the flesh, and the devil; and if you would not let me sit by you, a great many Churchmen wouldn't; in fact, churches do all of them, as at present constituted, seem too narrow and low to hold true Christianity in its proximate developments. I, at least, cannot help believing them so.

My dear friend, can we dare, after our sins against you—can we dare *wish* for a letter from you sometimes? Ask, we dare not. May God bless you. Even if you had not praised me and made me so grateful, I should be grateful to you for three things—for your

poetry (that first), then for Milton's hair, and then for the memory I have of our visit to you, when you sat in that chair and spoke so mildly and deeply at once.

Let me be ever affectionately yours,

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

GEORGE ELIOT (Mary Ann Evans) (1819–1880)

WAS born at Arbury Farm, near Nuneaton, the youngest daughter of Robert Evans. Her earliest literary work consisted of a translation of Strauss's "Leben Jesu." After a visit to Geneva, she went to London and became a contributor to, and afterwards assistant-editor of *The Westminster Review*. Encouraged by her friend, George H. Lewes, Miss Evans began to write fiction, and her first book, "Scenes of Clerical Life" (1857), was followed by "Adam Bede" (1859), which was instantly successful. Her subsequent novels "The Mill on the Floss" (1860), "Silas Marner" (1861), "Romola" (1863), "Felix Holt," and "Middlemarch" (1871–2), all published under her pseudonym "George Eliot," contributed to her fame as a great writer of fiction; but her later work was less successful. In May 1880 George Eliot married her old friend Mr. J. W. Cross, but her death took place a few months later, in December of the same year.

To Madame Bodichon[1]

SPANISH SCENERY

BARCELONA, *February 2*, 1867

Are you astonished to see our whereabouts? We left Biarritz for San Sebastian, where we stayed three

[1] Reprinted from the "Life and Letters of George Eliot," by kind permission of Mr. J. W. Cross, and Messrs. William Blackwood & Sons.

days; and both there and all our way to Barcelona our life has been a succession of delights. We have had perfect weather, blue skies, and a warm sun. We travelled from San Sebastian to Saragossa, where we passed two nights; then to Lerida for one night, and yesterday to Barcelona. You know the scenery from San Sebastian to Alsasua, through the lower Pyrenees, because it lies on the way to Burgos and Madrid. At Alsasua we turned off through Navarre into Aragon, seeing famous Pampeluna, looking as beautiful as it did ages ago among the grand hills. At Saragossa the scene was thoroughly changed; all through Aragon, as far as we could see, I should think the country resembles the highlands of Central Spain. There is the most striking effect of hills, flanking the plain of Saragossa, I ever saw. They are of palish clay, washed by the rains into undulating forms, and some slight herbage upon them makes the shadows of an exquisite blue.

These hills accompanied us in the distance all the way through Aragon, the snowy mountains topping them in the far distance. The land is all pale brown, the numerous towns and villages just match the land, and so do the sheepfolds, built of mud or stone. The herbage is all of an ashy green. Perhaps if I had been in Africa I should say, as you do, that the country reminded me of Africa; as it is, I think of all I have read about the East. The men who look on while others work at Saragossa also seem to belong to the East, with a great striped blanket wrapped grandly round them, and a kerchief tied about their hair. But though Aragon was held by the Moors longer than any part of Northern Spain, the features and skins of the

people seem to me to bear less traces of the mixture there must have been than one would fairly expect. Saragossa has a grand character still, in spite of the stucco with which the people have daubed the beautiful small brick of which the houses are built. Here and there one sees a house left undesecrated by stucco; and all of them have the fluted tiles and the broad eaves beautifully ornamented. Again, one side of the old cathedral still shows the exquisite inlaid work which, in the *façade*, has been overlaid hideously. Gradually, as we left Aragon and entered Catalonia, the face of the country changed, and we had almost every sort of beauty in succession; last of all, between Montserrat and Barcelona, a perfect garden, with the richest red soil —blossoms on the plum and cherry trees, aloes thick in the hedges. At present we are waiting for the Spanish hardships to begin. Even at Lerida, a place scarcely at all affected by foreign travellers, we were perfectly comfortable—and such sights! The people scattered on the brown slopes of rough earth round the fortress—the women knitting, etc., the men playing at cards, one wonderful, gaudily dressed group; another of handsome gypsies. We are actually going by steamboat to Alicante, and from Alicante to Malaga. Then we mean to see Granada, Cordova, and Seville. We shall only stay here a few days—if this weather continues.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894)

CHRISTINA GEORGIANA, was the daughter of Gabriele Rossetti, a distinguished Italian exile, and sister of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Mr. William Michael Rossetti. She began to write verse while still a child, but her earliest volume,

"Gobelin Market and Other Poems" (1862), marked her as a poetess of the highest order and originality. In her subsequent works (which comprise many volumes afterwards published in a collected form) her rare gift of expression was developed. Many of her poems are devotional, but every line that she wrote shows the hand of the true poetess.

To Dante Gabriel Rossetti[1]

THE DANTE PICTURE

30, TORRINGTON SQUARE, W.C. [*September* 5, 1881].

MY DEAR GABRIEL,—We are all congratulant over the Dante picture, Mamma heading our family phalanx. I do certainly think it would have been sacrificing real advantage to a mere punctilio if you had held out about its being sold (merely in appearance) from the Exhibition. It looks very friendly of Mr. Caine to have gone off to Liverpool on purpose to see with his own eyes. I am much pleased with his *Academy* article, though sorry that he seems to have misapprehended my reference to the "Portuguese Sonnets." Surely not only what I meant to say but what I do say is, not that the Lady of those sonnets is surpassable, but that a "Donna innominata" by the same hand might well have been unsurpassable. The Lady in question, as she actually stands, I was not regarding as an "innominata" at all—because the later type, according to the traditional figures I had in view, is surrounded by unlike circumstances. I rather wonder that no one (so far as I know) ever hit on my semi-historical argument before for such treatment—it seems to me so full of poetic suggestiveness. That *you* praise it endorses its worth to me, and I am graced

[1] These letters of Miss Rossetti are reprinted from her "Family Letters," by kind permission of Mr. William Michael Rossetti.

by Mr. Watts's approbation. I do not recall anything in my private [? previous] volume which foreshadows the "Ballad of Boding"; but your memory may well outdo mine. As to the Sonnet you hint at, I cannot joke on that subject. I am desirous of the *Athenæum* critique, and fancied it might be out ere this; but am not impatient. In a letter from Mrs. Scotters sent me up a warm admiring word on "Monna." . . .

To get back a moment to my book. I cannot forbear adding how delighted I am at the favourable verdicts on the "Pageant." *I* fancy it among the best and most wholesome things I have produced, and I have had a quiet grin over October's remark which ushers in November, as connecting it with my own brothers and myself! Pray appreciate the portrait.—It dawns upon me that "Sleep at Sea" is the piece in your mind. I hope the diversity is sufficient to justifiy the "Ballad of Boding."

Surely you need not restrict your affectionate family callers to those moments when there is something "to show"; but this is merely an observation *en passant.*

With a best of good loves from our Mother, etc.

Christina Rossetti to William Michael Rossetti

SWINBURNE

July 26, 1882.

My dear William,—Before I say how delighted Mamma was with your letter yesterday, I will beg you to convey her thanks to Lucy for her previous one, which was the first to tell us the good news of your being better. . . . You may think how (if possible) our Mother is

now more than ever anxious that no imprudence should detract from the well-being of her "Willie Wee"—now that her four have dwindled to 2. Everything you narrate or can narrate of your funny little five cheers and interests her warm, grandmotherly heart. I wish little Mary may inherit inward virtues even more than outward beauty from our fine-natured and fine-personned Grandmother; of whom, by the by, *I* sometimes reminded Mamma in my early days. . . .

Do you remember how *our* Maria was impressed by the impartiality of your "Lives of Poets"? Now I am so too, as well as by the admirable lucidity of your style. The facts would be interesting under any treatment, but you help instead of hindering readers. Those were interesting notes about Trelawny you lately contributed to the *Athenæum*, and naturally *I* clap hands at your review of Longfellow.

Please give Lucy our two loves, and (if you can get through them) our ten kisses to Olive, Arthur, Helen, Mary, Michael. What a prostrate poem does Mr. Swinburne address to the twins! He has kindly presented me with his volume, a valued gift, and I cannot forbear lending you—more especially lending Lucy—the letter which accompanied the book. How much I like the Dedications, both prose and verse. This is the fourth book he has sent me, and I not one hitherto to him—so for lack of aught else I am actually offering him a "Called to be Saints," merely, however, drawing his attention to the verses.

Mr. Sharp has paid us two visits, one this afternoon, all about his book. Through Aunt Charlotte he has had access to the "Girlhood" picture, and soon he hopes to see what Miss Heaton has at Leeds. I called

his attention to the window and pulpit at Scarborough, of which apparently he had never even heard. He tells us that Mr. Tirebuck is sub-editor of a Yorkshire paper, I forget the name. Some of the Memoir of Gabriel I really admire, so I have far from ended in mere laughter at the style. Oh dear! how willingly would I *incur* Income Tax for the sake of *not* murdering Egyptians or any one else; and our Mother would, I am sure, double or triple hers with the same object.

I was forgetting to tell you that Mamma has lent Mr. Sharp her cherished "Main's Sonnet Book," giving him leave to have the *Sonnet* drawing engraved for his book. Mr. Clarke considered that the original could far more advantageously be worked from than could Mr. Sharp's photograph of the same.

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T.J.O